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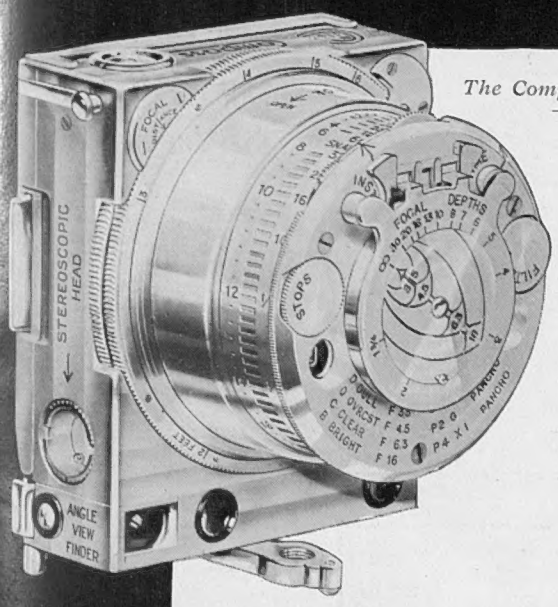

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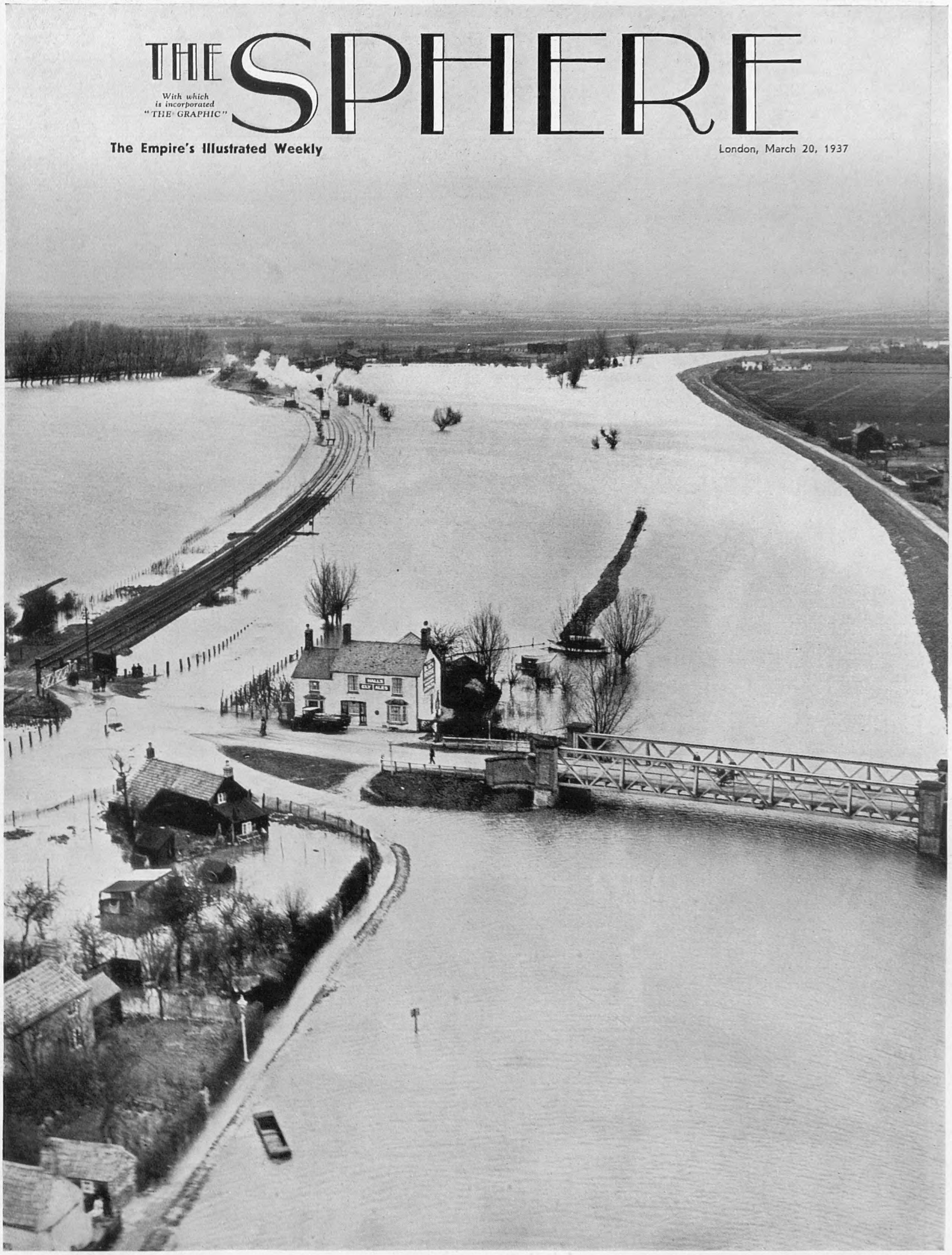

The Floods in Fenland

A Glimpse of the Inundated Countryside at Welney on the Littleport–Wisbech Road

Somerset and the Thames valley have been flooded time and time again in this winter of climatic vagaries, but in worst plight of all is the Fen country where at the beginning of this week flooding had not only taken place on an extensive scale, but a further 250 square miles of low-lying land were threatened with inundation as the waters of the Ouse brimmed to the very summit of the dykes. At every point men kept watch on the waters, toiling day and night despite their weariness to prevent further breaches in banks completely soddened by the abnormal rains. Bags of clay were rushed to every danger zone, and officials of the Great Ouse Catchment Board did everything possible to avert a major disaster. Volunteers came from all parts of the countryside to help in the work, and in one village in the Ely district the town crier was sent out to summon help, men and boys jumping from their beds to answer the call. Further rains on Tuesday aggravated the position

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GAIETY IN THE ROYAL BOX: Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret Rose, accompanied by their grandmother, the Countess of Strathmore (left), watching with evident interest the equitation test for children under thirteen years of age at the National Pony Show at the Royal Agricultural Hall, Islington. The Princesses spent over two hours there

A LONDON NEWSLETTER

32–34 St. Bride Street, E.C. 4.
Wednesday, March 17, 1937.

THE PREMIERSHIP AND THE PEERAGE.—The prophets are now generally agreed that Mr. Baldwin will lay down his office as soon as convenient after the Coronation. Mr. Chamberlain may take his place in time to preside over the Imperial Conference. Mr. MacDonald will (they agree) retire at the same time. The necessary reconstruction of the Cabinet will maintain the Coalition balance as far as possible in the same ratios. What of the two ex-premiers? The prophets declare that Mr. MacDonald is likely to remain a member of the Lower House and that Mr. Baldwin has decided to go to the House of Lords. If Mr. Baldwin does accept the earldom to which he is clearly entitled (if he wants it) it will give me exactly the same shock of surprise as when Mr. Asquith accepted a peerage and revived an ancient earldom for his line. Why? Because I should say that no two premiers—both so admirable, so honoured, so trusted—ever revealed more cynical personal views on the bestowal of honours and titles with which they have so much to do. Mr. Asquith did much to emasculate the constitutional power of the House of Lords, and then was pleased to enter the shattered sanctuary under one of its historic titles. Mr. Baldwin had two distinct and god-sent opportunities to restore to that House some measure of its former power and to give the country once more a safeguard against hot-head legislation, and he refused to take them up. The title of Earl Baldwin no doubt has an appropriately "Old English" ring and Mr. Baldwin would adorn it. But when *The Times* suggests that personal considerations might well decide Mr. MacDonald to crave leave to refuse, while Mr. Baldwin accepted, an hereditary seat in the Upper House, one is inclined to press for further information.

AN ILLOGICAL SURVIVAL?—It is certainly not with any logic to be made a question of the means to "support" an earldom—in these days. There are a score of peers lacking the means to support a middle sized villa. Nor does the hereditary difficulty make one case for acceptance more clear than the other. If either or both accept a peerage, they put the seal on their own creed that the system of keeping up an hereditary House of nearly 800 members is consistent with modern democracy, and affords an adequate safeguard against ill-considered constitutional iconoclasm. Otherwise, they are just accepting toys from a Christmas cracker which merely keep alive class distinctions. Indeed, the illogicality of the whole business of the creation of hereditary titles (both peers and baronets) cries out loud for a review. No doubt the Wensleydale peerage decision is the *fons et origo* of the present absurdity (as Sir J. Marriott suggests, adding a possible way out). We are perpetually being reminded of the democratic nature of the Monarchy; we are assured by observation that modern Monarchy needs no buffer state between it and the common people; we know that the bestowal of titles keeps in repair a class barrier which we are alleged to be striving ever to break down; we have proof that more than one of the Dominions are strongly opposed to their bestowal; and finally we believe that a vast majority of the nation, if it had the chance to register its opinion by referendum, would vote for its abolition. What proportion of the adult population to-day would be in favour of continuing a system whereby the unselected, unproved heirs of the selected-ennobled shall have by chance of birth a right to influence and direct the legislative policy of a free democracy—a right which is not taken away from them even where they have proved themselves incompetent to manage their own affairs, or for other reasons unfitted for any position of responsibility or honour? A very small proportion. The biennial award of titles (and honours also in large measure) is I believe becoming increasingly irritating to the Empire as a whole; certainly to such part of its citizens as can be called truly democratic. I am not quite so crude as to suggest that the whole business can be ended by a nod. Our Constitution is like a glorious oak, hundreds of years a-growing and not likely to be axed down—a pride to ourselves, the envy of our neighbours. I do no more than point out the fine absurdity which the conservation of this estate of the realm produces in a nation which insists on being called a Democracy. And in that sense Mr. Baldwin never misses an opportunity to jeer at Democracy.

GROUSE OR CARBIDE?—The Caledonian Power Bill died a second death within a year in the House of Commons last week.

Who killed the Power Bill?
Sparrow M.P.
Uncaged and free
He killed the Power Bill.

Why did he kill it? Every Sparrow M.P. killed it for a different spoken reason. All were agreed that it is essential that Great Britain should without delay start to produce calcium carbide. We need it for oxy-acetylene welding and for other vital processes in shaping metal for the production of aircraft, armaments, and other engineering needs. And at present we have to buy it expensively from Scandinavia—100,000 tons or so annually. Without it we can't turn out an airplane. Well then, why kill the Bill? Because, said some Socialists, it sought to place this vital industry in an area not officially distressed. It was *made* for South Wales. Nonsense, said others; if you locate it in South Wales, you must employ steam power, which means coal, instead of the cheaper and plentiful water power—the hydro-electric power—available in the Highlands, by use of which alone (as proved at Spondon) we can compete economically with foreign producers. But coal must be used, replied the Distressed Areas protagonists; for how else can you revive South Wales? But the Highlands are a distressed area also, said some Northern Cocksparrows. No, cried other Northern Cocksparrows; they have the grouse and the stag and the salmon, and these creatures give vital employment to the Highlands, since they attract the moneyed Sassenach and American. All these points, pro and con., were put in the forefront but the point which entered the heart of the murdered Bill was not exposed to view. I have not a doubt that what really killed the Bill was the sentiment of the silent majority, which every day grows more strong, that the curse of mechanisation is threatening the last remnant that remains to us of our heritage of peace and beauty, and that the last stronghold that remains lies in the Highlands, and that at all costs those Highlands must be preserved as a nature reserve and a breathing space and an escape from the stress and ugliness of industrialisation and all the disquiet it implies. One day, when this tyranny is overpast and this universal madness cured, a remnant shall return to the sanity of their forefathers and shall find no place for repentance though they seek it diligently with tears—unless we kill these Bills.

MR. BOLITHO'S "EDWARD VIII."—Mr. Bolitho is first in the field, and no doubt it will be a large field. The subject of his new book ensures for it a public interest which requires no expensive publicity to arouse. But if it is sensation which the general reader hopes for, he will be disappointed. Mr. Bolitho would probably be first to admit that no *important* life of Edward VIII is likely to be written for another fifty years. The closing chapter of the reign and book add nothing at all to what Mr. Baldwin revealed; and Mr. Bolitho treats with model dignity, and restraint, and terseness, and without sensation, of those events which, beginning with the Prince's first acquaintance with Mrs. Simpson, culminated in the abdication. The bulk of the book, however, was planned and written in no tearing hurry. Mr. Bolitho was an eye-witness of events during at least one overseas tour, and on many aspects of his subject's career he impresses one with the shrewdness of his judgment and with his fairness. Yet it is an unfavourable verdict which he finds. Making all allowances for Edward VIII, for all the handicaps of his position, the errors of judgment of those who planned his education, the psychological effect of the war, the unexpected reactions on his character produced by his world tours and his contacts with

all manner of men, the verdict is still unfavourable. He failed. Brilliant in promise, brilliant in public appearances as Prince of Wales, he failed in the supreme test. I find Mr. Bolitho especially sound and just on the delicate theme of the relations of father and son, and his chapter on King George's death is finely done. He puts his finger also on the vital defects of the son's character. He could not tell the difference between wheat and chaff in choosing his friends, and he refused to take advice. Those defects led him into the circumstances which inexorably implied abdication, and led him to make three cardinal errors in the handling of an impossible situation. But it is worth remarking that, had his father lived, those circumstances would as surely have resulted in his failure as Prince of Wales as in his failure as King.

A DIFFICULT TASK.—Mr. Bolitho puts the date when the tide began to flow against the Prince as 1924 after the American tour. His popularity still increased after that date, the bulk of his most useful and spectacular work was done in the following ten years, but no doubt from 1924 the voice of criticism began to be heard in louder whispers, and never died away. That King George's discipline of his sons led the Prince into antagonism towards the "older men" in high places is not wholly accurate. To the end Mr. Baldwin was more than a counsellor, he was a trusted friend. And a candid. And the Prince did not lack candid friends. Those round him more than once told him frankly what they thought of some of his actions. No biography of him can afford to dispense with any mention of his personal staff. Their testimony is a vital part of any important biography of Edward VIII; if it ever be forthcoming, it cannot be so for forty years. Let us also remember that he has lived out little more than half of man's allotted span. The time has not come to write a history of his life, because it is not over and because it is too delicate a subject to-day for plain words and unfettered judgment. As for the history of his *reign*, it is but the history of a few months. With these exceptions and limitations, and in the face of heavy difficulties, Mr. Bolitho has made the best of an impossible task. Nevertheless, to be first in the field has its penalties. There are signs of haste. The index is not very helpful, and there are one or two careless errors. The Kaiser is not Edward VIII's "grandiose uncle" (he is first cousin once removed) and the Prince, I think, was in Tanganyika Territory when he heard of his father's illness, not South Africa. That East African safari deserves a mention, for it was important. It was then that those nearest the Prince first realised that he had not the will for Kingship and all the sacrifices it implies.

"BACK IN 1912."—Sir Ian Hamilton writes well and speaks often in public. He has a distinguished military career behind him and his experience of war has made him hate it. Recently he said in Manchester words to this effect (as reported):—"Human affairs tend to develop and to repeat themselves in recurring cycles. The fatal 25-year cycle has swung round again and we are back in 1912. Again we have tied our own hands by our Staff conversations with France. We have ceased to be impartial and lost our free hand. We are arming in favour of Russia and France and against our blood relations, the Germans." Memory revives in me. In 1912 (I forget the exact date) I chanced to cross the Atlantic to Canada in the *Empress of Britain* with Sir Ian. He was going out to inspect Canadian forces. He was friendly to a young man and we quarter-decked together on the voyage. I have a note that he expressed much the same opinion of our fettered position then and of what was coming. To that extent Sir Ian is consistent and proved a prophet. To-day we all, reading his words, say "this man has moral courage." He is stating an opinion very controversial. We all know that the character and mentality of Frenchmen and Englishmen are poles apart. Intellectually the French despise us, and we do not rate as highly as we should French virtues. We simply cannot make head or tail of their ways of thought. We are as oil and water. It is easy for us to say that the German—the ideal German at least—is much nearer allied to the Anglo-Saxon character. When we entered Cologne at the armistice we had proof positive that the British soldier felt this truth. But what happens to-day? Whenever we re-affirm our blood-relationship, some leader of modern Germany says or does something so revolting to British standards that we hurry to disclaim relationship. Sir Ian's strong expression of opinion is every bit as contentious in its high political and diplomatic aspect. The "pros" in high places are as fiercely convinced as the "cons." What is truth?

"GREAT POSSESSIONS."—Mr. William Douglas-Home's play tried out at the "Q" and lately produced at the Duke of York's received a curiously mixed reception—not from the audience which was as enthusiastic as it was fashionable and was even moved to wipe away a furtive tear, but from the critics. Others have treated the Group Movement with inside knowledge and with humour, and got away with it in literature. Perhaps there is something about the Movement itself which is controversial and rouses irritation in otherwise fair-minded critics. How else to account for the utterly variant judgments of, say, the critics of *The Times* and *The Morning Post*. Piffle, unworthy of serious examination, or moving, clever, and sincere? An undergraduate effort to be brushed away with a smile or a fine piece of dramatic writing? Mr. Home has tried his hand at several plays. I could see promise in a very early one—a lurid and unpleasant theme developed in a nursing home setting. I read it in MS. and felt that he would go on trying until he got across the London theatre footlights. Well, he got across the other night—both ways. I wonder what is the truth about his play. Many of his personal friends and contemporaries were clearly moved by it. I wonder also of what literary vein in a long Border ancestry Mr. William Home is an outcrop. It is not very easy to trace.

WISDEN WHILE YOU WAIT.—The snow-drifts lay 8 ft. deep in the Wolds, but that didn't prevent *Wisden's Annual* from poking its cheerful head through like a yellow daffodil on a giant stalk. Getting ready for cricket, Wisden is of all *signa veris* the most delightful and significant. You snatch your copy from the bookstall and hurry through the snow to your fireside and then in a moment the scent of new-mown grass and warm earth is in your nostrils, the heat of the sun is on your back, and your fare is rich and racy. It tells you everything you want to know of cricket past and to come. Of the giants lately departed to play on the Elysian cricket fields; little Bobby Abel with his gig lamps, and twister Boz, and Major Wynyard, and that great lobster, Simpson Hayward, and Brearley of the lion heart who got so many wickets and telegrams on the famous grounds of England. It tells of Allen's men and their struggle down under with shrewd judgment and without sentimentality, of the public schools and their prospects and records, and as usual, it features its selected cricketers of the year, Copson, Worthington, Gover, Barnett, names which last year were almost news. And the Editor says a truism I have hammered out for years and years—the endurance of our star cricketers is taxed too much by non-stop cricket and over many star fixtures. If we are to beat Australia next time, we must ration our fixture lists and nurse our chosen men. Cricket is—round the draughty corner. In a few weeks we shall hear the click of ball on bat as the schoolboys start practice at Lord's.

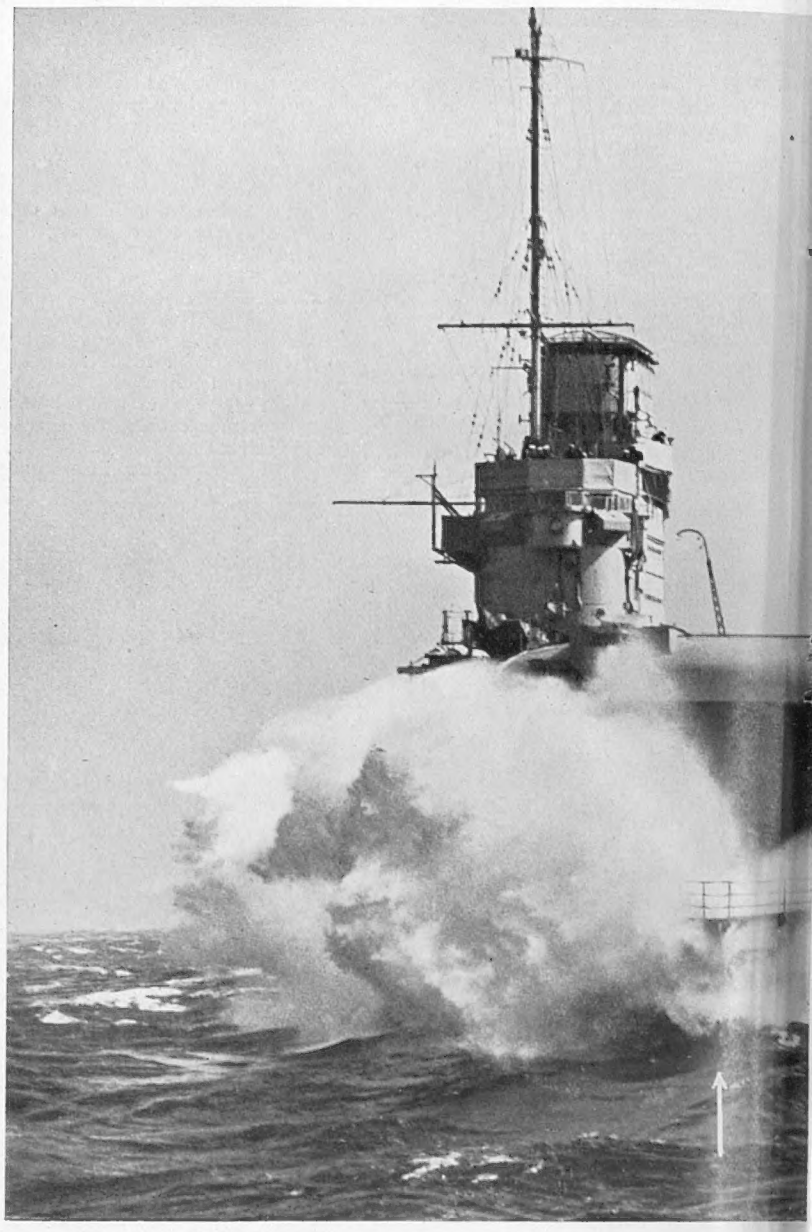
THE OLD STAGER

THE GREAT BLIZZARD: While last week-end London and the South experienced an almost continuous downpour of rain, other parts of the kingdom were snow-bound as a result of a tremendous blizzard which in Ireland continued for three days. *Above on left*—Cars engulfed on a road in County Down, where their owners temporarily abandoned them. *Above*—A lorry stuck on Wardley Hill between Leicester and Uppingham

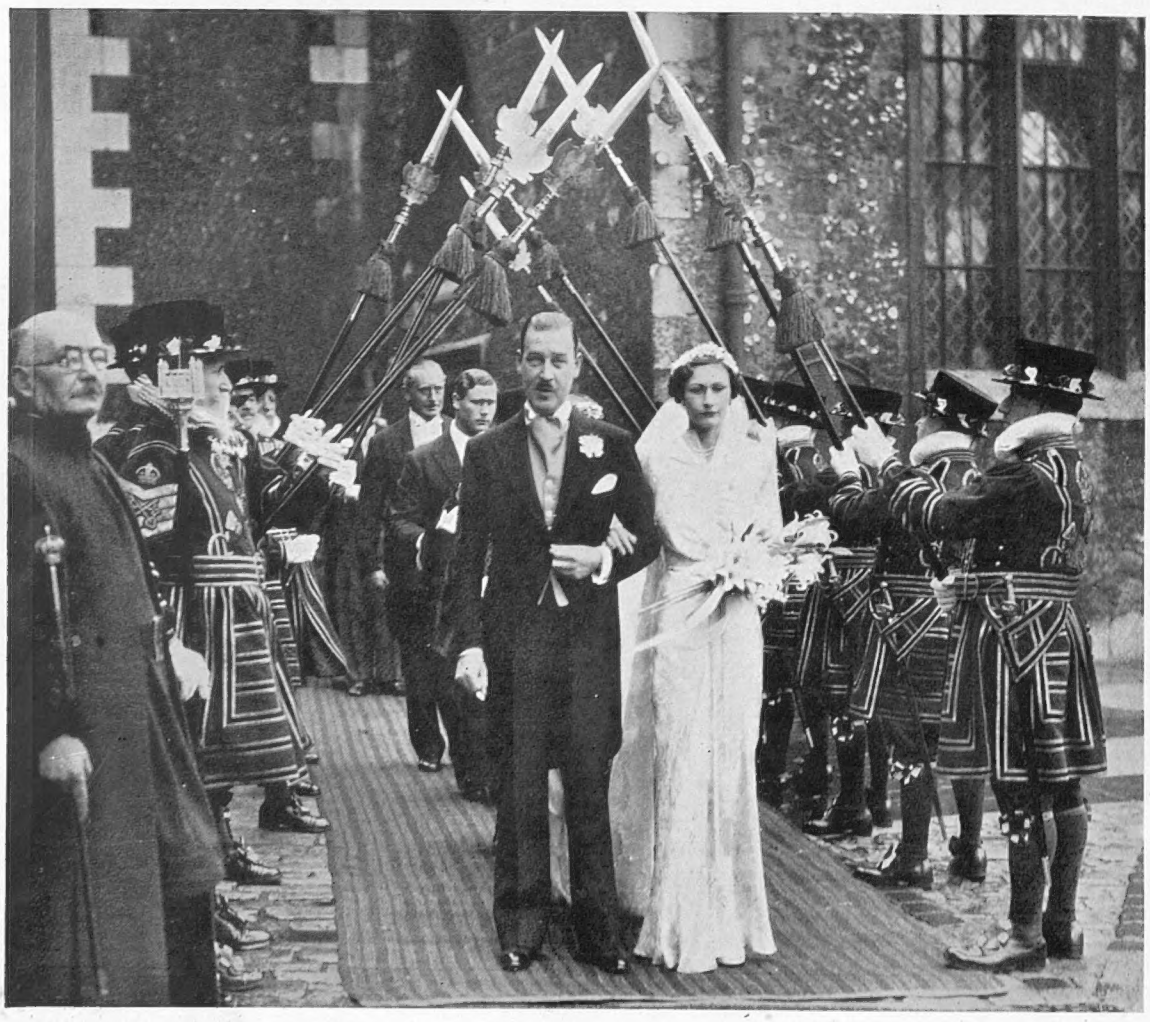
THEY ARE GROWING UP: Miss Margaret Lindsay Williams at work in her St. John's Wood studio on her portrait of Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret Rose who are depicted in white organdie dresses and holding posies of primroses. Princess Elizabeth will celebrate her eleventh birthday on April 21, while her sister will be seven in August

HEADLINED

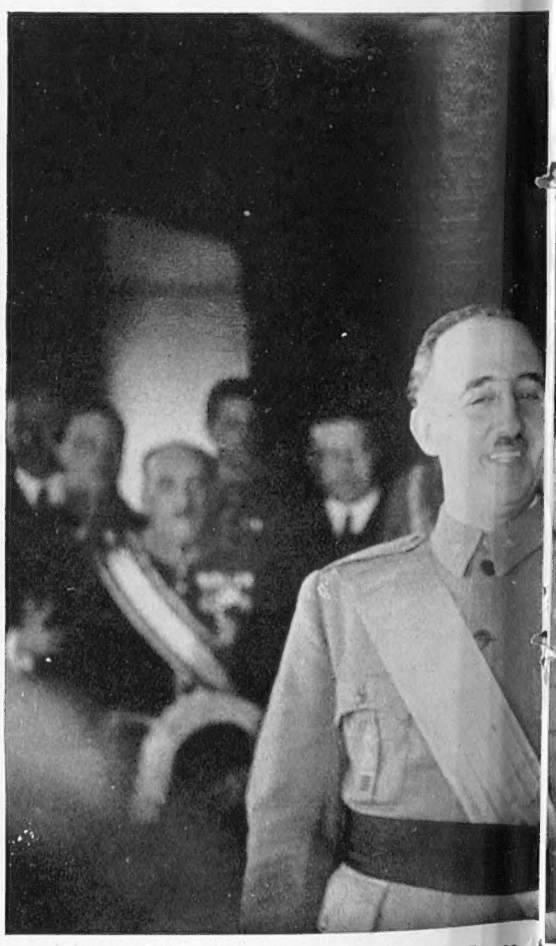
THE FIRST EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR TO ENGLAND: His Excellency Dr. Hafez Afifi Pasha seen as he left the Egyptian Embassy in London for Buckingham Palace where he presented his Letters of Credence to the King. Previous to this appointment Egypt was represented in London by an Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary



EVEN KEEL: The 22,500-ton aircraft carrier *Glorious*, remains steady though ploughing through choppy of the Home and Mediterranean Fleets, which were Tangier, in extremely unfavourable weather condi

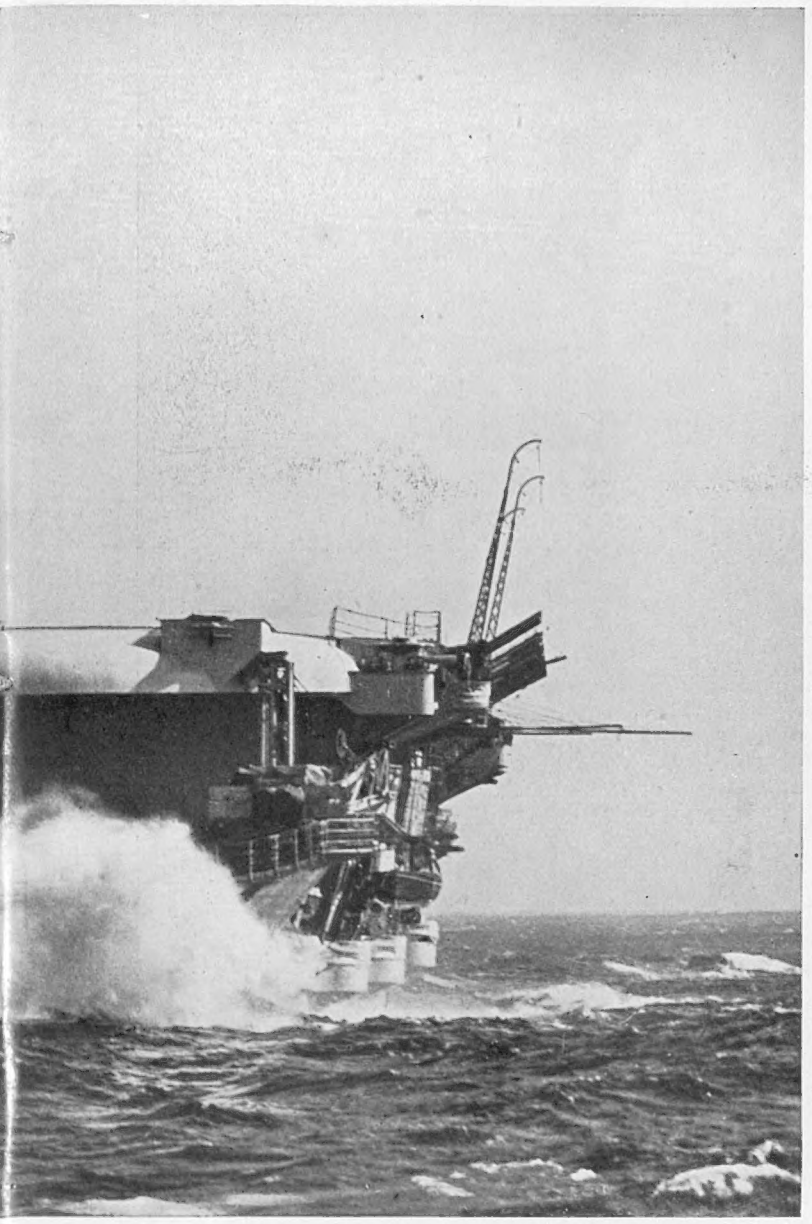


A BEEFEATER GUARD OF HONOUR: Mr. James Hart Rutland and his bride, the Hon. Joan Milne, only daughter of Field-Marshal Lord Milne, passing beneath the pikes of the Yeomen warders after their marriage last Tuesday at St. Peter ad Vincula in the Tower of London. Following the ceremony, at which the Chaplain General to the Forces officiated, Lady Milne held a reception in the King's House in the Tower precincts



THE NAZIS RECOGNISE THE REBELS: General Franco simo and Head of the Government of the Spanish received General Faupel (right) at Salamanca, when new German Ambassador to Spain. Up till then

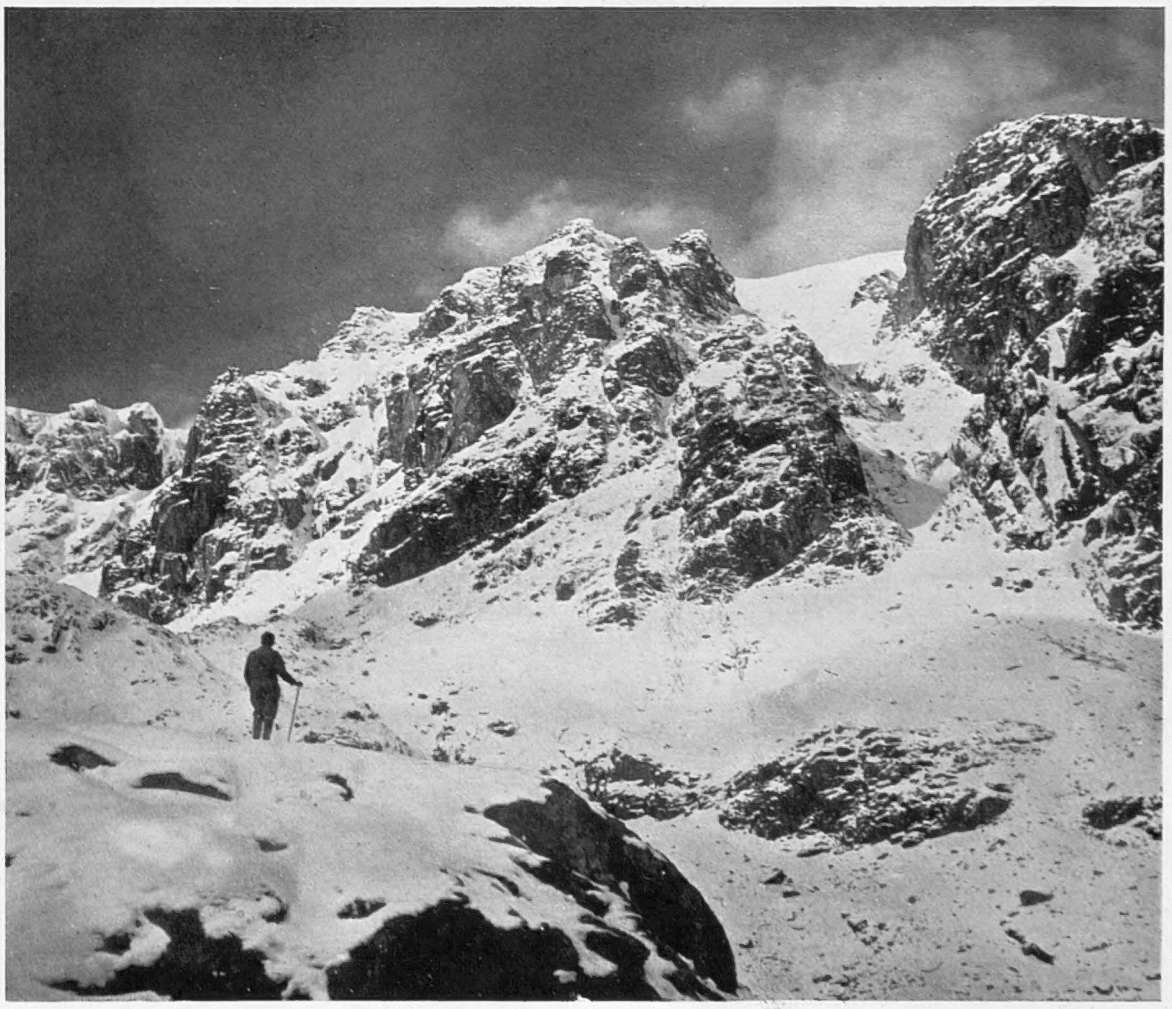
HAPPENINGS



her bows (indicated by an arrow) almost obscured, seas. A picture taken during the combined exercises held recently in the Atlantic, about 200 miles west of tions. Afterwards all units forgathered at Gibraltar

TO COMMEMORATE THE CORONATION Queen Mary went to Queen Mary's Gardens, Regent's Park, last Monday to plant a tree on a site made available by the Office of Works. By the wish of Her Majesty a tulip tree was selected, and although it is too young to flower this year, it should in future be resplendent with blossoms on the Coronation anniversary

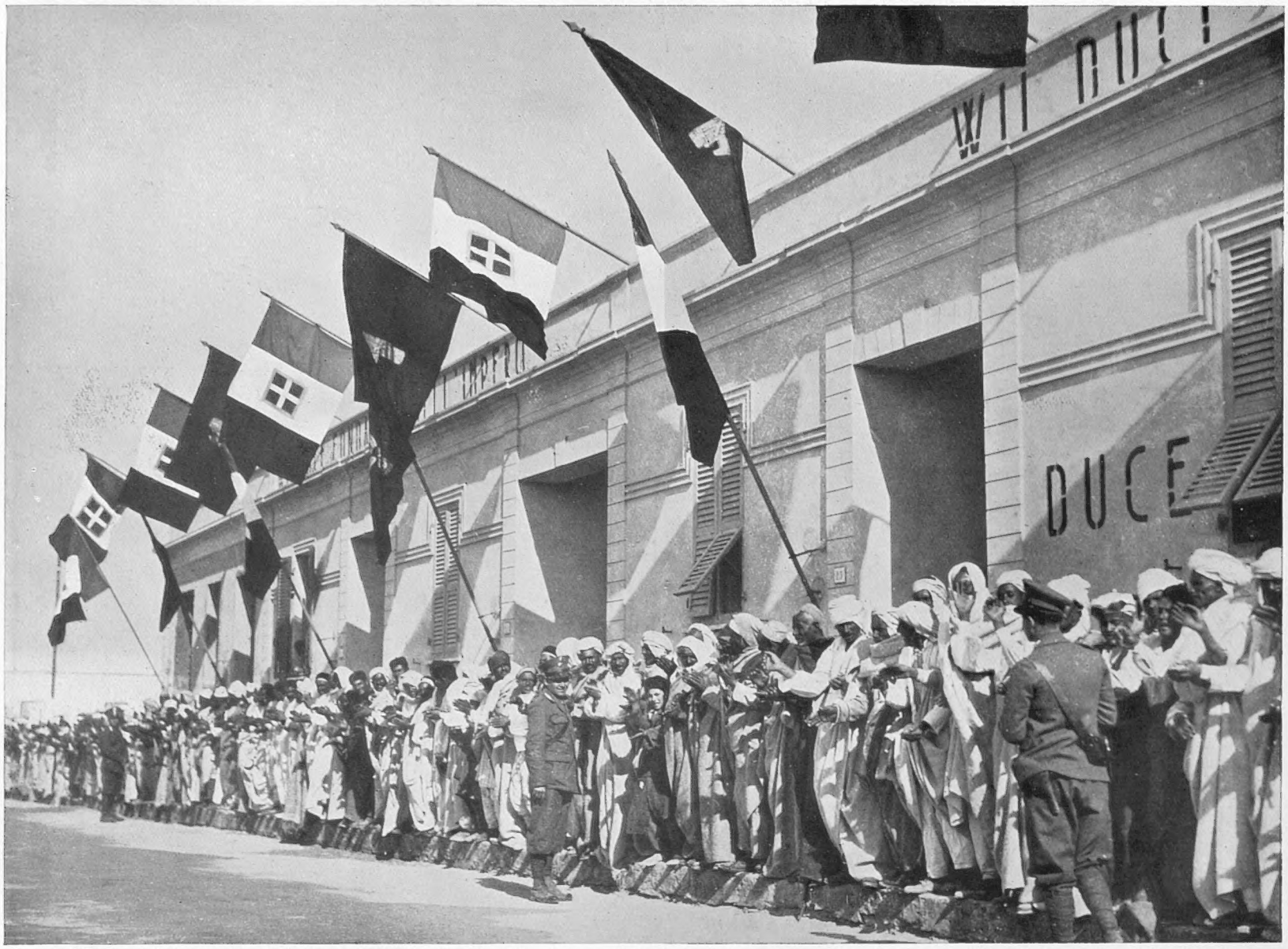
(centre) is now regarded by Germany as "Generalis- State," and it was in this capacity that he recently the latter presented his Letters of Credence as the General Faupel had been German military adviser



THE SNOW-CLAD HEIGHTS OF BEN NEVIS: The great peak presents a wonderful spectacle at the moment, and many climbers have been attempting ascents finding the snow conditions reasonably good. Climbers in Cumberland, however, have not fared so well, and last week it was reported that a party of twelve Cambridge undergraduates was marooned for five hours on the north face of Great Gable before being rescued from their plight

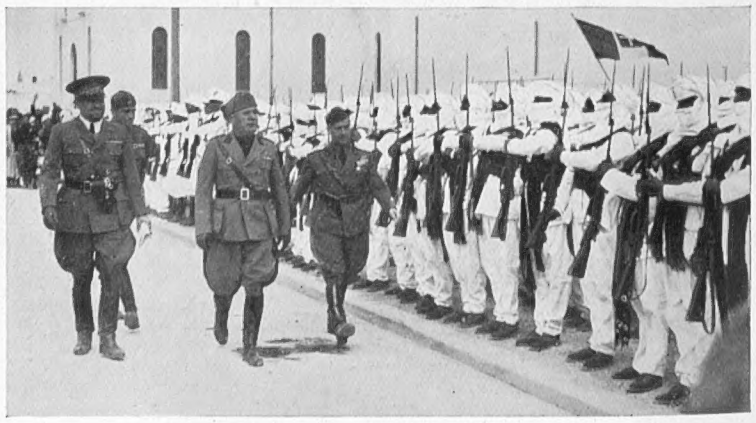
ARABS HAIL MUSSOLINI ON HIS LIBYAN DESERT JOURNEY

The Duce Lands at Tobruk and then Inaugurates the Great New Coastal Road from the Egyptian Frontier to Tripoli



WAITING TO GREET THE DUCE: Arabs, most of whom had trekked in many miles from the surrounding desert, lining a street in Tobruk in readiness to acclaim Signor Mussolini on his arrival there at the start of his ten-day tour of Italy's North African Empire. The buildings bore inscriptions of welcome in bold lettering. Gleaming white burnouses were the order of the day

TRAIL BLAZER: Signor Mussolini, accompanied by bearded Marshal Balbo, Governor-General of Libya, walking along the new 1,000-mile coastal highway after inaugurating it at its starting point, Amseat, on the Egyptian frontier. During his stay in Libya it was arranged that he should journey along the entire length of the road at the head of a five-mile cavalcade of cars



INSPECTING A NATIVE REGIMENT: Signor Mussolini, accompanied by Marshal Balbo, walking down the lines during the visit to Bardia; another point on the new highway. *On left*—An Arab delegation that came to Tobruk

The Flood Threat to the Fens After Weeks of Torrential Rainfall

WATERLOGGED BRITAIN

A Somersetshire River Bursts its Banks and Swamps the Countryside

TOUCH AND GO: Flood-water cascading down the 10-ft. dyke which serves as a barrier against the River Ouse and at the same time carries the main Cambridge–Ely road. A scene in the area of the Great Ouse Catchment Board where flood conditions, which have gradually been getting worse for the past eight weeks on account of heavy rainfall, were reported on Tuesday last to be approaching a critical stage, many of the dykes being in danger of bursting on account of the pressure of water. Barges loaded with clay were standing by at strategic points, ready to strengthen any banks showing signs of giving way

THE FLOOD UNLEASHED: Water pouring on to the low-lying countryside after the river Parret had burst its banks at Stathe, near Langport, Somerset. The latest and most serious of the series of floods that have occurred in the West Country this winter as a result of the abnormal rainfall. On Monday it was reported that the total rainfall at Kew for January and February was the greatest since the year 1870, and at Greenwich it was higher than any recorded since before 1815

A GREAT CHAMBERLAIN YEAR: The sudden death of Sir Austen Chamberlain this week at once calls to mind the year 1903, when the names of father and son were on everybody's lips. For it was then that Sir Austen was made Chancellor of the Exchequer for the first time, and that his father, Joseph, electrified Britain by his pronouncements on tariff reform. The latter is depicted in this drawing from "The Sphere" 1903, making his famous speech at Birmingham and exhibiting two loaves as a demonstration of the negligible adverse effect of protection

IN PRE-WAR DAYS: *Left*—Sir Austen and his wife pictured together in 1913. *Right*—A somewhat earlier portrait study

THREE GENERATIONS: Joseph Chamberlain, apostle of tariff reform; his son, Austen Chamberlain, the maker of Locarno; and his grandson, Master Joseph Chamberlain

STATESMEN BOTH: The late Sir Austen Chamberlain, former Chancellor of the Exchequer and Foreign Minister, and his half-brother, Neville Chamberlain, Premier designate

SIR AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN

The Passing of One of Britain's Elder Statesmen

A Planned Economy for the U.S.

President Roosevelt Gradually Unfolds His Plans for His Second Term of Office

AS the programme of the President of the United States for his second administration unfolds it becomes steadily clearer that he intends to impose a planned economy on the country. Depending on which side of the fence you happen to be . . . and notwithstanding Roosevelt's recent overwhelming victory there were 16,000,000 votes against him, which means that the conservative idea is not quite extinct in the United States . . . it may be a good economy, or it may be a bad economy; but there is no doubt that it is to be a *planned* economy, with all that that implies.

Mr. Roosevelt has hitherto announced his intention to revive the essential features of the National Recovery Act, which means that industry and industrial labour will have to operate under a plan. He has also projected a six-year flood-control and power-development programme, which means that vast public works are to go forward under a plan. And, since the President specifically asks that States and municipalities join with the Federal Government in the venture, and that they make their own plans for public works to coincide with the federal programme, Roosevelt is proposing not only that the Federal Government shall dictate to industry and industrial labour the terms of wages, hours, and employment, but that it shall supervise and subordinate State and local governments, at least in so far as their economic activities are concerned.

If this introduction seems elaborate, it is none the less over simplified. For, if the present era of the United States can be described at all, it must be called the Non-Euclidean Age, an age in which all antithetical statements are equally true and untrue. Nor are statements at this time mere epigrams to embody the discoveries of a pleasant dalliance with a fantastic geometry. They are edicts, profoundly affecting, and forever, not only the corporate life of State and society, but the dearly cherished and closely harbored personal life of the individual; that personal life which, of its own force, goes on regardless of public events, which supplies the individual with his only valid and enduring reason for existence, and which suffers untold agony when it is distorted and deformed by something as impersonal and irrelevant as the exigencies of commodities and prices. No consideration of the President's programme which does not bear in mind this complete dislocation of the personal life can be entirely illuminating.

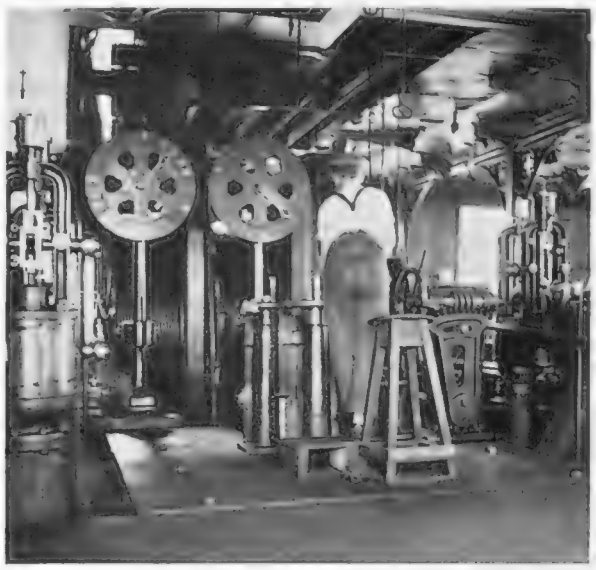
Turning, then, to the next revealed step of the President's programme, we find that he proposes a 10-year plan to avert droughts in that vast and hazardous region known as the Great Plains, which includes Texas, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Montana, New Mexico, South Dakota, and Wyoming. He proposes a federal agency, to work with State, local, and regional agencies, to promote land, economic, and social re-adjustments, and to co-ordinate all activities; and further, it is to dovetail with the 6-year, five-billion-dollar, flood-control and power-development programme "in the larger aspects of public works planning."

It is clear here, and it will be clearer later, that the President is working toward a synthesis of the entire economic life of the country. Specifically, the announced objective is the "conservation and utilisation of all waters available." It intends an economy representing "generally a more rational adjustment of the organisation of agricultural and cropping plans to natural conditions." This means, among other things, that the Government will not only continue to tell the farmer *how much* he may plant, but also *what* he shall plant; and it also means that the Federal Government will tell the State, and even the municipality, how it shall spend its money, and what laws and ordinances it shall enact.

Now, all of the President's objectives are good: to make a hazardous land safe to live in, to lift the crushing burden of meagrely rewarded toil, to improve generally the economic status of the hardest-working, most courageous people in the world—people who, until the third and fourth generation, have battled with a grim and treacherous land, and who, even in the face of recent catastrophe, may be said to have fought a winning fight. But it is doubtful whether the President fully appreciates the problem he has tackled.

There are proposals in the President's announced plans, moreover, that will set this whole country by the ears. Co-operative grazing, changes in regulation of water supply, federal dictation of local legislation, and limitation of the cash crop. The great problem of a thousand small ranchers is to secure at least some cash to free themselves from the disadvantages of barter. There is enough dynamite here for a considerable explosion, and instead of achieving social adjustments, the President may discover that he has managed a social upheaval.

AT THE PIT HEAD: Tin miners returning home after their shift underground. A scene at the South Crofty mine, near Camborne, Cornwall, a county where the industry still flourishes although the production represents only a very small proportion of the world's total. For some weeks past there has been a tremendous boom in the London metal markets and tin has shared in the phenomenal rise in prices. Earlier in the month its value per ton topped £300, rising £17 10s. in one day alone



THE WINDING GEAR which raises the cage in the shaft of the South Crofty tin mine. *Below*—Miners in the cage

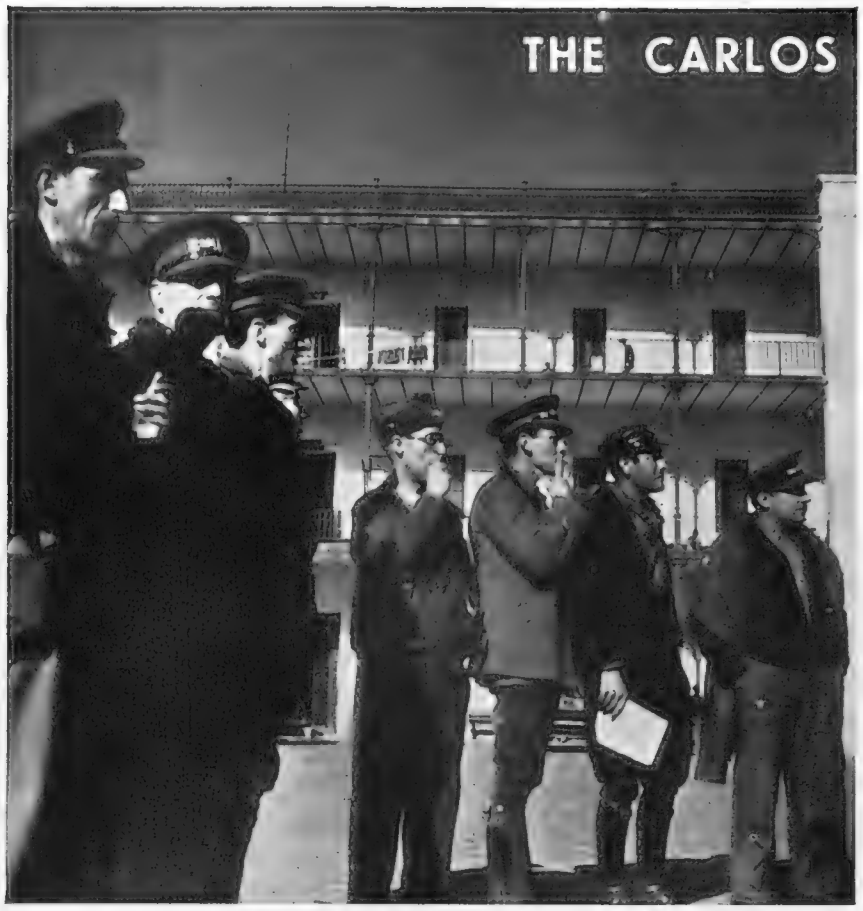
The recent phenomenal rise in the price of tin has been a direct result of Britain's rearmament programme, but the position has not been allowed to get out of hand as the International Tin Committee has stepped in and raised the production quota, thus adding approximately 2,700 tons of tin a month to the world's stocks and making the metal purchasable at a more reasonable price

THE SCRAMBLE FOR TIN

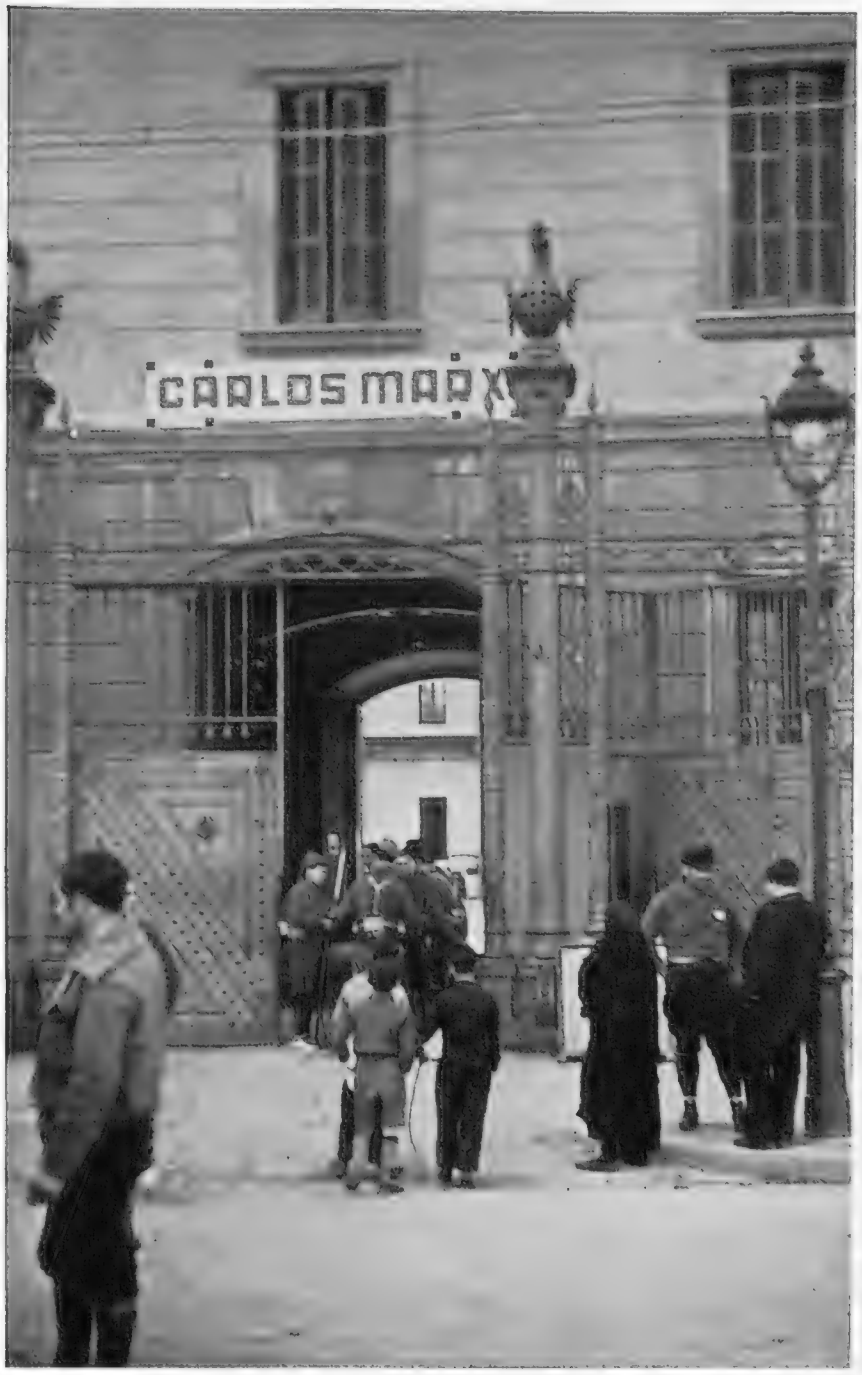
A Remarkable Feature of the London Metal Markets

THE CARLOS MARX BARRACKS, BARCELONA

Where the Government has been Training Foreign Recruits



SOLDIERS IN THE MAKING: At the start of the Civil War, when lack of organisation was the Spanish Government's great weakness, French, Russian, and other volunteers from abroad were sent into battle as soon as they arrived in the country and, needless to say, they suffered severely at the hands of General Franco's better trained forces. In order to combat the situation the Carlos Marx barracks at Barcelona was turned into a big training centre, and since then recruits for the International Brigade, as it is called, have all undergone a thorough course of instruction before going to the front. *Left*—Officer-instructors in the barracks courtyard. *Above*—The last batch of foreigners to arrive in the Catalan capital prior to the international ban on foreign volunteers coming into force



REVEILLE: A member of the International Column sounds his bugle in the square of the Carlos Marx Barracks, calling his comrades from their slumbers

ACADEMY OF WAR: *Above*—The main entrance to the barracks with its great iron gateway of elaborate design above which is a new notice board bearing the words "Carlos Marx," an honoured name in Left-wing Spain. *Right*—Recruits receiving training in military theory—an important part of the curriculum at the barracks. The rest of their time is taken up in long and arduous route marches to bring them to the pitch of physical perfection, in gunnery practice, and rifle drill

UNEARTHING A ROMAN LUXURY SPA IN FRANCE

Excavations at Alba, Town of the Remote Ardèche, which in its Golden Age Rivalled Nimes and Arles

By FERDINAND TUOHY

WHERE ROMANS MADE HOLIDAY: The present state of the excavations on the site of the amphitheatre at Alba, the town of the Ardèche Department, Southern France, which in Roman days had a population of over 40,000 and was known as a great luxury spa, rivalling even Nimes, Arles, and Orange in importance. It is expected that finds of the first importance will be made there during the next few years

FOR the carless there is still the ghost of adventure to be had in going on an inquiry into the Ardèche, France's most primitive, poorest, stoniest, and least populated department, and one of her oldest, rising from the Rhône below Valence, into the central massif of Auvergne and the Cevennes.

You have to sleep at the nearest town the night before if you want to start sufficiently early next morning to be back the same evening at your kicking-off point—in this case Montélimar. In winter road transport is virtually cancelled, so that one has to have recourse to puffing, grunting mountain trains of the little quickness—that is, stopping everywhere to pass the time of day.

Actually it is all very pleasant, very "away" after the sultry, politics-ridden Bouches-du-Rhône. There's a kick to be had out of leaving behind all your Mussolinis and Hitlers and Stalins and starting off up into this forgotten land, there to go back 1,600 years and tread for a morning soil several feet below which are the remains of Alba Augusta, once a fashionable watering place of the Augustan era, perhaps twice as big as the Vichy of to-day.

I had heard that the Ministry of Fine Arts was sponsoring serious excavation work at last, and wrote to the local Mayor with this result—

"Monsieur, Il est parfaitement exact que des fouilles sont entreprises à Alba. Les premiers travaux ont permis de découvrir le théâtre romain. Alba était une ville de 40,000 à 60,000 habitants au moment de l'occupation romaine. D'ailleurs je me ferai un plaisir de vous accompagner lors de votre visite et de vous donner tous les renseignements pouvant vous intéresser."

(One is led to wonder if a stray journalist from the Continent would extract anything resembling the above from one of our own mayors.)

As the 7 a.m. convoy of the little quickness gasped up a great gorge of steep, African barrenness and I munched and thermos-ed—hating to take breakfast earlier, when one is not ready for it—I learnt about the Ardèche, past and present. A highly volcanic past bequeathing the tormented, pumice-stone landscape, on giant proportions, that we know. One of the most unsettling landscapes to be in alone. Up in the Cevennes, once, I involuntarily let go "the gates of hell!" on coming upon towering, age-torn grey cliffs narrowly between which lay one's path.

A very rainy department; snow always on the highest peak, 7,000-ft. Mt. Mézenc. Population below 450,000 and shrinking. Average expectation of life rather startling: 33 years. The inhabitants speaking a patois of the "oc" language in which one finds Greek, Latin, and Arab expressions. But French spoken, of course, too. Agriculture as the stand-by—vineyards, wheat, silkworms in the van—supported by some mines and a flock of minor mineral waters.

MOVING SPIRIT: M. Franck Delarbre, the present Mayor of Alba, who has been largely responsible for bringing about the excavation of the town and who takes a tremendous personal interest in Roman antiquities

Under the Roman conquest, the Ardèche was Helvia, and its capital Alba Helviorum. The local golden age seems to have been situate towards the end of the third century A.D., when Alba rivalled Nîmes, Arles, Orange (the biggest), and Lyon. But the passage of the Vandals, under one Crocus, meant the end of Alba—more so than in the case of its contemporaries—and the next we know is of the feudal Middle Ages when Alba had become Aps, of the county of that family name. The massive, turreted château of that day, dominating the whole countryside, yet stands and is even inhabited—but not so as you'd notice it exactly, because its owner, a Riviera rentier, bought it as a speculation in the good times for £500 and now can't get rid of it. It is going, furnished, for under £1,000. *But* 'tis a case of log fires all the time, or apparently one might as well settle in an ice cairn.

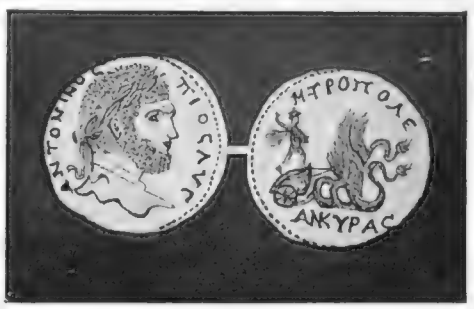
When the Revolution broke the territory had long been known as Vivarais. Then the locals invaded the château, in possession of a family named Montagu, and set up a soviet therein, from which idyll they were to be wrenched by the strong arm of the Directory which established the Ardèche of to-day. A notably Protestant countryside still.

. . . Aubignas-Alba. I descend. And to my joy, for it is a soft spring morning with the almond trees already in blossom, the stationmaster points to Alba quite a distance away, its château reared on high. I shall have to stride out to destination, several kilometres. What better than to put as much as possible between you and the criminally-crazed world below?

Just why the Romans parked here is rapidly borne in upon one. Alba, which was rechristened from "Aps" thirty-five years ago, lies in a plain entirely surrounded by heights varying from 1,500 ft. to 2,000 ft. in altitude. Not only did these heights provide splendid forts to guard against the barbarians mainly to the west and north, but the resultant "cirque" produced an admirably sheltered plain for Romans to indulge their sensuous life of baths and sports.

In four kilometres I saw four persons, prior to meeting M. Franck Delarbre, Mayor. A young-looking mayor who surprised by saying he had served in the war in the Chasseurs Alpins. I soon found he was the animator of the whole business of digging up Alba Augusta. He produced press cuttings, documents, including a letter from the British Museum saying they had a statuette and a dagger from Alba, photographs, a box full of Roman coins, pieces of mosaic, rings, keys, the usual remains. He said:—

ADORNING THE MAIRIE: A head of Brutus (*below*) and a portrait bust dating from the Middle Ages (*above*), both unearthed at Alba and now occupying positions of honour on the stuccoed walls of the Mayor's office



IMPERIAL ROMAN COINS BROUGHT TO LIGHT AT ALBA: The obverse bearing the head of an emperor and the reverse a representation of two serpents drawing a chariot

"This is the first time any serious effort will be made to lay bare the foundations of Alba Augusta. Six years ago Yale University was to have given £5,000 towards the excavation work, but the crisis hit the United States, and nothing could be sent. When the Popular Front Government arrived last year there was a fresh hope, and in September last we received £25—£25 to dig up a city measuring at least 2 kilometres by 1 kilometre! It enabled me to employ precisely three workmen for seven weeks until the bad weather came. Nevertheless, you will see presently what those first excavations revealed. The start has been so encouraging that this year we are to get £500, which will enable me to employ ten workmen all through the summer. But, you understand, the work is most delicate—carefully with the pickaxe all the time. No pneumatic drill!

"What is wanted is a plan covering twenty or even twenty-five years, at a cost of £2,500 a year, meaning the employment of fifty workmen using the latest tools and methods. Yes, for a total expenditure of £50,000, which would bestow permanent employment on dozens of families for half a lifetime, France could enter into possession of a stirring new inheritance—one which would assuredly attract tourists; we are so near the main national highways. For we are positively aware that 6 ft. or 8 ft. down are the foundations of this once-flourishing capital—centre of strategy, commerce, and luxury. When vegetation becomes dried up in the summer, we can see the tracings of the streets and houses. Wonderful mosaics are certainly there, like Pompeii's. But it is wrong to call this 'the French Pompeii.' Pompeii was overwhelmed by lava, and whole houses and almost streets have been uncovered. Crocus fired Alba, which was later razed to the ground and, one might say, pushed under the surface by peasants anxious to cultivate the land. We can only aspire to uncover the foundations." Yet listen to these two statements out of the past:—

"Over the whole neighbourhood, and especially in the district known as the Palace (wrote the village priest in 1763) are to be found the remains of the ancient city. Any day when one digs one comes upon medals, urns, and other relics. Also tombs in which bones are still recognisable, leaden aqueducts, fine pillars, and splendidly inscribed stone pieces, bronzes, and mosaic work."

Just a century later Canon Rouchier wrote: "One has but to scratch the surface to reveal the ruins. Lamps, vases, fragments of sculptury, rosaries, marble, are all to be found. Each discovery attests the wealth and luxury of Alba at the time of its fall, of its love of the arts, and its state of splendour."

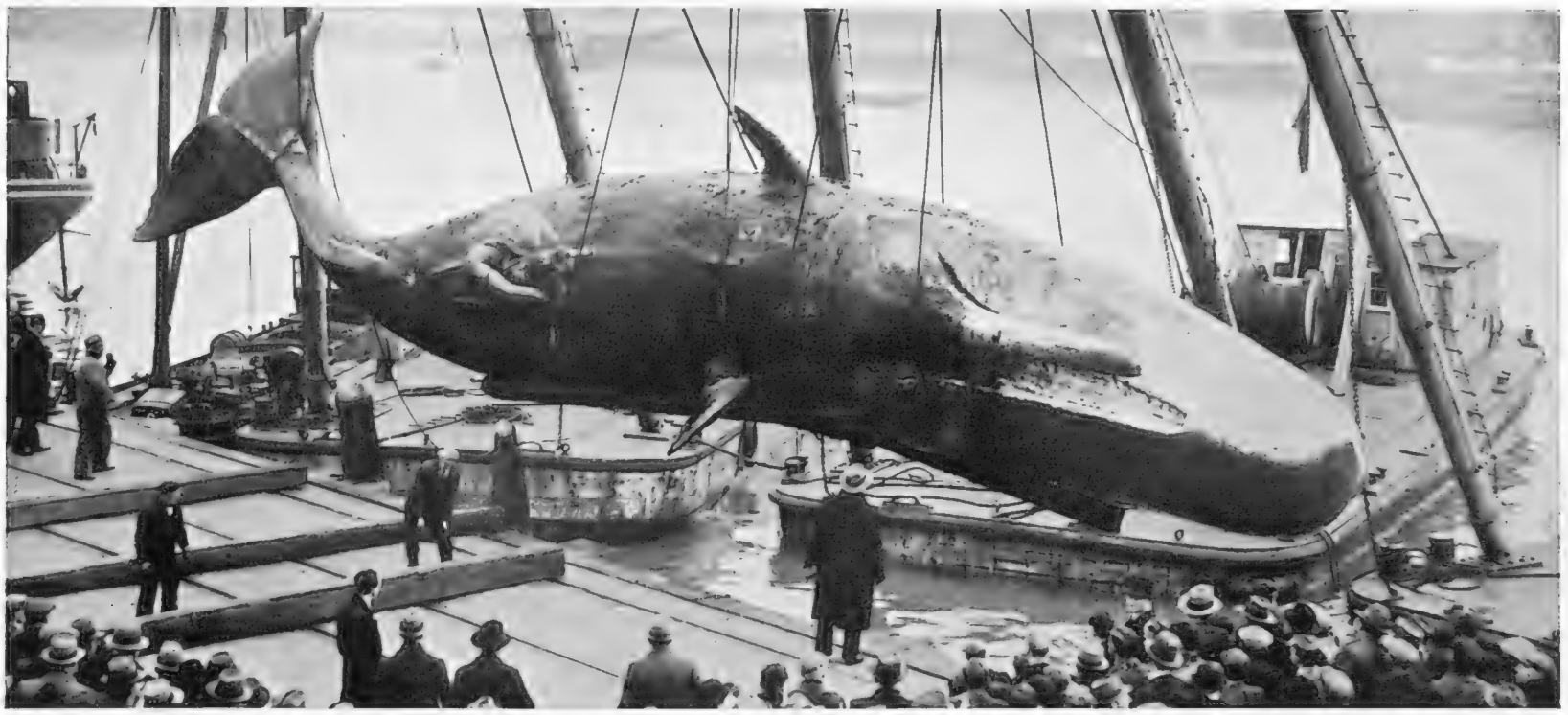
Perhaps it is salutary to remember that the earlier excavations of Pompeii were more or less affairs of loot, and that not until half-way through last century were the diggings undertaken in the

(*Continued on page* 464)

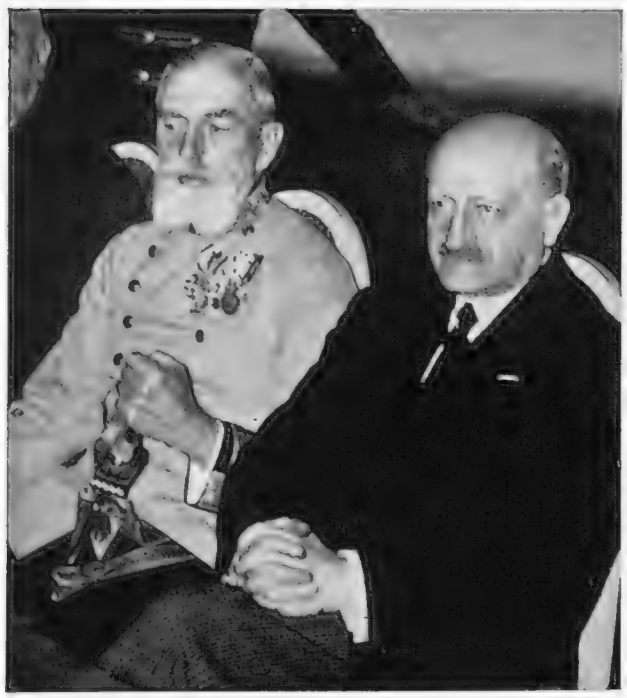
Cachalots Washed Ashore on the Dutch Coast—The Crown Princess of Denmark in Her Native Sweden

EUROPEAN SURVEY

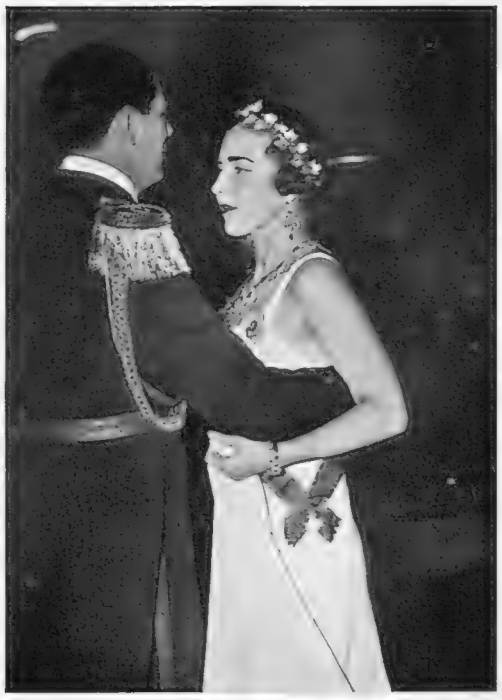
The Pope to Recognise Queen Elena as Empress of Abyssinia—King George II at Mytilene



HOISTED ON HIGH: One of the two cachalots, or sperm-whales, recently washed ashore on the Dutch coast—an occurrence unknown since the winter of 1761-2—and afterwards taken to Rotterdam, where they attracted great public interest. Both were young males, each about 59 ft. long and weighing some 50 tons, and it is thought that they were driven out by older males through jealousy. Both monsters showed scars incurred in struggles with octopods—their natural prey



MONARCHISTS MEET: Archduke Salvator of Habsburg and Baron von Wiesner, Austrian Royalist leader, at a recent mass meeting of Habsburg supporters at the Zirkus Renz, Vienna. Such gatherings are frequent these days, but the prospects of an immediate restoration appear remote



ROYAL GUEST OF HONOUR: The Crown Princess of Denmark, granddaughter of the Duke of Connaught and of King Gustave of Sweden, at the ball given in her honour at Stockholm by her father, Crown Prince Gustav Adolph

AS A MARK OF ESTEEM, the Pope is to send to Queen Elena of Italy the Golden Rose; an honour that will be presented by a delegation and accompanied by Papal Briefs in which her title as Empress of Abyssinia will be recognised

IN AN ISLE OF THE ÆGEAN: King George II of Greece, accompanied by the Archbishop of Mytilene during his recent visit to this island, the first since his restoration, when he received a great welcome from the inhabitants

LITTLE RED REFUGEES FIND SANCTUARY IN FRANCE: These youngsters, compelled to leave Spain by reason of their parents' adherence to the Government cause, are now being cared for at the Château de la Brevière, in the forest of Compiègne, which has been placed at their disposal by the Swedish philanthropists, M. and Madame Aschberg, who are seen standing at the top of the steps on the left

BRITAIN'S MECHANISED MACHINE GUNNERS

"THE OLD AND THE BOLD" DEMONSTRATE THEIR NEW EQUIPMENT: Men of the mechanised machine gun company of the 2nd Battalion, West Yorkshire Regiment, "in action" in the snow at Aldershot during a demonstration following an inspection by their Colonel, Field-Marshal Sir Cyril Deverell, Chief of the Imperial General Staff

"DRIVE PAST": Field-Marshal Sir Cyril Deverell, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, takes the salute as the mechanised machine gun company of the 2nd Battalion, West Yorkshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales' Own) pass him in review on a snow-covered Aldershot road. The 2nd Battalion was raised in 1857—exactly eighty years ago

BOUND FOR A SUNNIER CLIME: The animated scene as members of the Highland Light Infantry from Fort George, Inverness-shire, were given a send-off by their colleagues and played out of Ardesie Station by pipe and brass bands. They are going to India for a spell of foreign service

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THE DESPOT: Caligula (played by Emlyn Williams) addresses the Roman Senate and demands the imposition of further taxes on the people. One of the opening episodes in *I Claudius*, the historical film now being produced by London Films at Denham and based on Robert Graves' successful novel of the same name

I will, like the pistol which killed the "Squeaker" (a "squeaker" is a criminal who blabs to the police and does not keep faith with his associates) remain absolutely silent. But the performances of several members of the huge cast call for the loudest of eulogies. Mr. Alastair Sim's Scottish crime "sleuth" is a joyous study; the type can be found in Fleet Street, *passim*, not quite so amusing, perhaps, but just as thirsty. "All news is good news," he declares, "no news is the only bad news." That should be found engraved on the heart of every good journalist when he goes to heaven — if any journalist ever goes to heaven.

Mr. Henry Wenman is back again in his old part of the night-club porter, which is important. What is even more important is that Mr. Wenman, after a plucky and victorious fight with failing eye-sight, is back again on the stage. As the sinister but likeable Captain Something-or-other Mr. Hartley Power is at his best, and as the blonde in the case Miss Jane Carr is at her loveliest, brunette beauty in distress being more than adequately represented by Miss Mercia Swinburne. Mr. George Relph's performance as the villain is clever enough, but a pleasant personality, like the cheerfulness of Charles Lamb's friend, would keep shining through.

Bird) the respectable, monotonously married after an evening on the spree which began mixed up with a dope pedlar. Thereafter it is and return home before wifely suspicion priately named farce, *Night Alone*, at Daly's

"Great Possessions."—If *Great Possessions* at the Duke of York's does not prove to be the means of the author, Mr. William Douglas Home, acquiring them, it at least establishes him as an earnest young dramatist who can say, like the late Alfred Lester, "I've gotta motta," and who knows how to put it into dramatic form very fairly well.

Mr. Home's "motta" is not to be "always merry and bright" but to give up all one's personal property, if one is fortunate enough to have any, for the sake of the very, very poor. The position is slightly more complicated, but that is the main feature. In short, here is a play which deals with an idealistic attempt to practise Christianity, in the most literal sense, in modern life. The thing has, of course, been attempted before, usually without success, and many plays have been written about it, some of them with considerable success, notably that beautiful play by Jerome K. Jerome, *The Passing of the Third Floor Back* in which Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson played with such tact and exquisite dignity a mysterious character obviously intended to be Divine.

In *Great Possessions* there is no real representation but there is something of the Christ-like spirit in this undergraduate, son of a rich peer, who acts the little master bountiful in the East End of London. Quite sincerely, he gives everything away. Unfortunately, he also gives himself away as being a silly young prig and a bit of an ass too.

However, if this is not entirely a happy picture of the "Oxford Movement" of to-day, it is a sincere one. Mr. Home's characters live and he knows what to do with them on the stage. I am convinced that he will one day write many better plays than *Great Possessions*—and I have seen very many worse.

* * *

"Bats in the Belfry."—I do not know why the new play at the Ambassadors Theatre should have been called *Bats in the Belfry*, unless it is because one of the characters is a parson, and parsons own, or are at least in spiritual charge of belfries. Everybody concerned in this bright if exiguous little comedy struck me as being singularly sane.

Sanest of all was Miss Lilian Braithwaite, who took every occupant of the belfry under her wing without batting an eyelid, and, incidentally, nearly acted everyone else off the stage. That was not necessarily due to any conspicuous lack of efficiency among her fellow members of the cast but because she had, in the slang of the theatre, "most of the fat." As the domineering but, apparently, placidly stupid aunt of a set of easily malleable people, she arranged things to her own satisfaction, got people in and out of matrimonial engagements, and lied and lied with the bland and sweet expression of madonna-like domesticity which Miss Braithwaite can inimitably assume.

AS SHE IS AND AS AN ARTIST SEES HER: Daphne Heard who has been playing Phoebe in the New Theatre production of *As You Like It*, standing beside a portrait of herself in costume by Eric M. Agnew

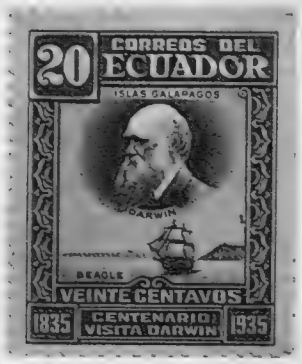
A CHALLENGING THEME: Hubert Gregg, Geoffrey Keen (son of Malcolm Keen), and Jane Welsh, who have leading parts in *Great Possessions*, the much discussed play about the Oxford Group Movement presented at the Duke of York's Theatre last week. The author is William Douglas Home, son of the Earl of Home and brother of Lord Dunglass, M.P.

VIMY RIDGE: A special half-price commemorative stamp issued by the French Government for ex-service Canadians

NOTED CALVINIST: Holland last year commemorated the attacks of Gilbert Voet or Voetius upon Descartes whom he bitterly accused of atheism. This three-cornered stamp is a brilliant example of the possibilities of stamp designing—head and lettering are all cleverly spaced out within the triangle

DON QUIXOTE: Another extremely clever design comes from pre-revolution Spain. The stamp was issued in honour of the Press Association of Spain, the design being by Bertuchi. The Knight and Sancho Panza are shown careering through the air on a wooden horse

SWEDEN FOUR-SQUARE: This rectangular design shows the head of the King of Sweden within panels carrying white letters



DARWIN: Ecuador celebrated the centenary of the visit of the great scientist by a special stamp—a neat design, but rather too much was attempted

The Philatelic Boom

How Royal Events During the Past Eighteen Months have Led to an Increase in Interest in Stamp Collecting

THE decease of one Sovereign, the abdication of another, and the coming to the Throne of a third, have given an impetus to stamp collecting unprecedented in recent times. Though the late King George's "Jubilee" stamps had and have an extraordinary popularity with Continental collectors (some issues have gone up 400 per cent.), their effect has been particularly felt by British philatelists, and has stimulated stamp collecting by amateurs, and schoolboys to take up this instructive hobby. The issue of the photographic Edwardian stamps aroused much controversy concerning their artistic merits or demerits; large stocks have still to be used up.

As usual it will be by the Dominions that the earliest issue of Coronation stamps will be made. Australia, South Africa, and Canada are vying with each other as to which shall first produce such stamps. India, Ceylon, the West Indies, the Straits Settlements (Malaya), and the Pacific archipelagoes are sending or have sent designs to the King for his approval. It is, however, only the frame and the pictorial parts of the design which have been submitted, the space for His Majesty's portrait being left blank. The King is said to favour a three-quarter length vignette, but so far he has not found a portrait sufficiently appropriate to please him for this purpose. Another detail must be considered: the Far East portraits require that the Sovereign be shown wearing a crown, for a bared head in the East signifies irreverence! Hong Kong is the first colony to announce an issue for the new reign. Within two or three months 25,000,000 of these stamps will be printed in London for the colony. The King's portrait will face in the opposite direction to that of King George, and as it is to be a half-length one, the new stamps will probably be larger.

Another instance of Royalty's influence in encouraging collecting was the unveiling by the Duke of Windsor (when King Edward VIII) of the Vimy Ridge memorial. On July 26 France issued two stamps of 75 centimes and 1 franc 50 cs., besides two view post cards, to commemorate the unveiling of the Canadian Memorial. The stamps, unfortunately, do not do artistic justice to this magnificent monument; the picture post cards give a better impression.

Another country to attract attention, though from a sad cause, is poor, distracted Spain, whose stamps will obviously be changed as a result of the civil war. A special series was issued for internal use in the Balearic island of Majorca. Two stamps were over-printed by the insurgents after their seizure of the island, "Viva España, Mallorca, 19 Julio, 1936." Whatever the result of the fighting in Spain, these "rebel" stamps will have a collecting value, and this will apply to Spanish Morocco.

More cheerful and artistic are France's two new special stamps. The one, issued in aid of the children of the unemployed, pictures a group of healthy children, happily showing the results of the food obtained through the surtax of 10 centimes carried by the 50 centimes stamp. The other will appeal to musicians and artists, for it carries a fine engraving of the statue by Bartholdi of Rouget de Lisle, singing "La Marseillaise," with a distant view of Lons-le-Saunier, where he was born.

Although Great Britain never pictures on its stamps anything else but the portrait of its Sovereigns (and, incidentally, is the only country never to put its name on its stamps), most other States print portraits of their famous men, generally in commemoration of their centenary anniversaries. Italy, who thus honoured the living poet-patriot, D'Annunzio, has gone as far back in history as to issue a series in honour of Horace. These are in commemoration of the two thousandth birthday of Quintus Horatius Flaccus, but as he was born on December 8, 65 B.C., they appeared some five months too soon! The designs are highly pictorial, representing scenes illustrative of his "Odes," "Satires" and "Epistles." The 25 centesimi air-stamp bears the line, "Expertus vaccum Daedalus area pinnis non homini datis," which may be rendered: "Daedalus made trial of the empty air with wings not granted to man." The 1-lira stamp has the familiar quotation "dulce et decorum est pro patria mori."

Another triumph of engraving is issued by Australia, commemorating the opening of the first telephone cable to Tasmania—the longest submarine 'phone wire in the world. This also bears seven lines of legible type, with a land- and seascape, and a figure of Neptune's wife, Amphitrite, holding the cable in her hands. This stamp will appeal to engineers and geographers as well as to philatelists. One more stamp, of interest to everybody, issued by Yugoslavia, depicts the island in Lake Bled, the scene of the Duke of Kent's happy courtship.

E. W. R.

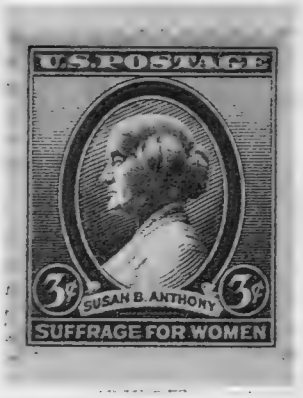
Many of those who joined in the warm dispute concerning the Edwardian stamps decried the older Georgian and Edward VII issues as being cluttered with ornament, which was crammed into an inadequate space. That this was not a very instructed view is evident from what a clever designer can do even with the limited area at his disposal. We give here some examples of designed stamps from the author's rich collection and from those which have recently reached us. An astonishing amount of artistry can come into play even within the bounds of the smaller types of stamp. In the better examples there is no separation between ornament and head; the whole design is one unified scheme.

MONGOLIAN REPUBLIC: One of the most brilliant sets comes from remote Tannu Touva known to few but philatelists

MALAY PENINSULA: As a perfectly balanced Oriental design, this ten-cent stamp from Kelantan must take a high place

THE PARTHENON: This stamp emanating from Greece places a view of the famous temple inside a rectangular space

ABYSSINIA: Italy has issued stamps for the new colony of "Etiopia." The head of King Victor Emmanuel is photographic, but the placing is fairly good



FEMININE FRANCHISE: U.S.A. recently honoured Susan B. Anthony, one of the pioneers of the Votes for Women movement

"MARSEILLAISE": Rouget de Lisle is here commemorated on a stamp of distinctly picturesque character. Although the scheme is realistic the balance of masses is very well contrived

CANADA: An old issue, but given here as showing what can be done to obtain a dignified, balanced result. The arch holds the scheme neatly together

BRITISH SOMALILAND: An oblong stamp showing the head of King George within a collar, and quite a number of other decorative incidents, in fact, too many. A courageous effort; the two colours helping the effect

WASHINGTON: The U.S.A. stamps have usually been of a simple character, bearing a head. Here the arch gives strength to the design

CYPRUS: Not too good. This stamp bears George V's head, a crown, a view, letting in labels, some denominations printed in two colours. Pretty at first sight, but inclined to be ornate

The WORLD *of* FLIGHT

The "Caledonia's" Non-Stop Feat: Jersey's New Airport: The Great Boeing Bomber adopted by the U.S. Army Air Corps

On left—SHOWING HER PACES: Imperial Airways' long-range Empire flying-boat, *Caledonia*, gliding to a standstill at her Southampton base after completing a remarkable non-stop flight of 2,300 miles from Alexandria in 15 hours at an average speed of 150 m.p.h., and this in spite of head winds and bad weather over France. *Caledonia* did the outward flight from England to Egypt in February and thus has now flown non-stop on two occasions a distance 400 miles longer than the Atlantic crossing for which she has been designed. Her apparatus for constant radio communication functioned perfectly throughout the journey

LINKING ENGLAND AND THE CHANNEL ISLES: *Above on left*—Mrs. A. M. Coutanche, wife of the Bailiff of Jersey, inspecting one of the planes after opening the new Jersey airport which has been completed at a cost of £130,000, and takes the place of the beach as a landing-ground for air liners. *Above*—A four-engined machine on the runway

On left—A STREAMLINED MONSTER AND ITS UNTIMELY END: This machine, the first of thirteen huge Boeing Y.B.-17 four-engined bombers built for the United States Army Air Corps by the Boeing Aircraft Company of Seattle, proved highly satisfactory under test, making a 2,300-mile cross-country flight in 9 hrs. at an average speed of 255 m.p.h., but unfortunately came to grief a short while afterwards, crashing and catching fire through being taken up with the controls, by some mistake, locked. In spite of this disaster the type remains in favour. The most remarkable features of its highly developed defensive armament are the revolving gun turret at the nose and the other gun positions in the "streamlined blisters" on the fuselage, giving an unusually wide field of fire that practically eliminates blind spots. Four 1,000-h.p. Wright Cyclone air-cooled radial engines driving three-bladed constant speed airscrews provide the power. The range is 2,500 miles, and it has a bomb-carrying capacity of 6 tons

THE BRITANNIA MOTIF IN NUMISMATICS: *Left*—The first known representation of Britannia as a female figure sitting on a globe, leaning with one arm on a shield, and grasping a spear in the other hand, is on this Roman coin of Antoninus Pius (died A.D. 161). The figure reappeared on a copper coin (*centre*) in the reign of Charles II when the engraver took as his model the famous Miss Stewart, later Duchess of Richmond. *Right*—A Britannia penny of 1890 with the lighthouse and ship in the background. Toward the end of Victoria's reign the latter features were abolished but it is possible they may now be restored

Preparing the George VI Coinage

How the Royal Mint Evolves Its New Issues

By R. J. MARTIN

THE first coins of the new reign will be circulated on Maundy Thursday, March 25, when, in keeping with ancient custom, poor aged men and women will receive money gifts from the King in the form of silver — fourpence, threepence, twopence, and penny.

The issue of the larger coins will follow, some at least before the Coronation.

It is now fourteen months since King George V died, and surprise has been expressed that no new coins have yet been issued. King Edward VIII reigned for eleven months but without a coinage of his own. Why does it take so long to prepare a new coinage? Is the Mint indifferent and dilatory in its methods?

No. Immediately on the accession of a sovereign the first steps are taken to effect the necessary changes in the coinage. But the task is a long one and many months must elapse before the bright new coins, bearing the fresh designs, are jingling in the pockets of the public.

Indeed, the tendency is for the time spent on the preparation of a coinage to increase. Greater attention is now being paid both to the artistic and technical requirements. Since the war there has been a slow but steady awakening public interest in the coinage, and our monetary authorities have done much to encourage this.

Since 1922 an expert advisory committee has been in existence to help the Royal Mint to create and maintain a high standard of excellence for our coins. The committee includes representatives of the various arts, and can speak with real knowledge and authority.

Young artists are encouraged to submit designs and whenever one shows real promise the Mint gives encouragement and help, even to the extent of striking specimens from the design submitted.

A design for a new coin when drawn on paper, possibly surrounded by a nice frame, may look very pleasing and excite much admiration. It does not, however, by any means follow that this design will be satisfactory when transferred by means of a die on to an actual coin. The design itself may be technically unsuited for reproduction at a single blow of a die or the balance of the design may not be sufficiently carefully calculated, with the result that too much metal is used on one side of the coin with disastrous results to the design on the other.

A notable example of this was seen in the pennies of King George V. Owing to the maladjustment of the designs the height of the relief on the head absorbed the limited amount of metal available, and not only was the reverse sometimes blurred, but a "ghost" or dull impression of the King's head could be seen on the reverse, surrounding Britannia. To cure these defects without preparing a new design was difficult, but certain modifications were made in 1925, while in 1928 the size of the head was reduced, with satisfactory results

It is essential that the artist keep in close touch with the technical and operative activities of the Mint whilst the new coins are being prepared. Unexpected difficulties often arise in the process and modifications of design become imperative. Sometimes these modifications may cause the design to lose much of its character, and it might even be necessary for the artist to go back almost to the beginning.

BRITANNIA ON A SILVER COIN: When this florin was produced in 1902 after the accession of Edward VII the design was a complete break with tradition in that it depicted the "ruler of the waves" standing

As there are so many current coins of the realm, each requiring a separate design in addition to the head common to all, it will be seen that the task of preparing a complete set of new coins is indeed stupendous.

The forthcoming changes in the coinage will, it seems, be much more extensive than those which occurred on the accession of either Edward VII or George V.

Considerable changes in design had occurred during the later years of Victoria's reign. There was the ill-fated Jubilee coinage which had such an unfavourable reception that completely new designs for the silver coins were introduced in 1895. At the same time modifications were made in the reverses of the bronze coins, the most notable of which was the abolition of the lighthouse and ship.

On the accession of King Edward it was felt that, as there had recently been such extensive changes, no great need existed for further ones Three coins only were altered—the half-crown, the florin, and the shilling. The florin was drastically changed. The design was a complete break with tradition and depicted a standing figure of Britannia. King George made even fewer changes on his accession. He left the coinage as it was, except for the florin, the design of which became once more conventional, and the sixpence. The five-shilling piece was missing from the Georgian set.

The advisory committee, however, soon after its appointment in 1922 came to the conclusion that the then existing designs of the coinage were unworthy. They were not only lacking in artistic merit but they presented technical difficulties in manufacture which prevented the striking of a really first-class coin. The Committee therefore recommended that the silver coinage be completely re-modelled. In 1927, then, after 4 years of selection and preparation, a new silver coinage, including once more the five-shilling piece, was struck from the designs of Mr. G. Kruger Gray These designs were a great improvement. They were well adapted for easy and economical minting. The impressions were sharp and likely to prove durable in circulation.

A further addition to the Georgian coinage was made in 1935 when, in celebration of the Silver Jubilee, a special crown was struck. The design, the work of Mr. Percy Metcalf, was a modern treatment of St. George and the Dragon.

The effigy on the 1937 coinage will be by Mr. H. Paget and it will depict His Majesty uncrowned. There is conjecture regarding the direction in which the head will be turned. It is customary for successive monarchs to be shown alternately facing the right and the left. But as no Edward VIII coins have been issued it is not known whether the new ones will regard, for coinage purposes, King George VI as successor to his brother or to his father.

RARITIES TO BE: Although King Edward VIII coinage was never in circulation in Britain these 1d. and ½d. designs, punctured in the centre, were issued in British West Africa last year. In time to come they will doubtless attain considerable value

The reverses of the silver coins are again to be by Mr. Kruger Gray who is an heraldic artist of distinction. His selection as the designer may indicate that no great departure is to be made from the heraldic tradition. We must, of course, be prepared for some novelty In the 1927 coinage the oak leaf on the 6d. and 3d. caused surprise.

No announcement has yet been made regarding the bronze coinage. Here again a break from tradition is unlikely. Our pennies and half-pennies will continue to carry Britannia but there might be changes. Some three years ago the Royal Mint stated that there was such evidence of the public's desire for the restoration of the lighthouse and ship to our bronze coins, that the matter would be considered when next a new coinage was introduced.

The new designs will be awaited with interest.

SEA-GOING SILKS AND CRISP COLOURED COTTONS

Accessories Should Supply Wit and Variety

Colour Favourites—Red and Blue

Sports Detail—Bark Buttons

IT isn't a good plan to take too many clothes when you are setting out on a cruise. They only complicate life, and they take up far too much room.

Neither is it necessary (though it is always delightful) to spend a great deal of money on them. So long as they are fresh and crisp and gay it won't matter that in the first instance they cost shillings and not guineas.

Look, for instance, at the evening dress and the little play-suit photographed here. The frock is made in white slub linen embroidered in red, blue, and black spots. It has a scalloped yoke and a high neck with a slit down the back. The skirt is moderately full, the charming bolero is scalloped, and round the waist is twisted a brilliant sash in red and blue taffeta. The price?—only 50s.

The three-piece is in white Celanese crepe. The shirt-waist top, with yoke and sleeves cut in one, an inverted pleat between the shoulders, and two large pockets, is attached to the pleated shorts. Over them is worn a skirt, fastened right down the front with natural bark buttons. This is an American outfit, and again the price is 50s. Both the evening dress and the play-suit come from Swan and Edgar, of Piccadilly Circus, W.

Your best trick is to liven each of your simple frocks and suits with witty accessories. Never fill your trunks with bits and pieces that mean nothing.

If you are tall and slender wear the very newest shorts, narrow legged, almost knee length, and made in chalk-striped grey flannel. They should be accompanied by a cotton shirt, over which you can put a bright bolero which stops just short of the matching belt.

On days when you are not afraid of getting sunstroke wear a lobster-pot hat. Made in wide-meshed straw so that you can see through them, they have no crown, and they dip down almost to the level of your shoulders.

Take lots of bright handkerchiefs (lobster-patterned ones have just appeared): several types of beach shoes (those we have sketched are made, one in red and white checked canvas, and the other with white raffia cords and royal blue kid straps); and, if you like jewellery, wear flexible bracelets of bronze-coloured glass, made in curved sections.

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

A Touch of Rawness in Louis Paul's Tramp Story : A Second Novel in the "Gone With the Wind" Manner

Reviewed by
VERNON FANE

THE other day a critic built a notice of Mr. Noel Coward's autobiography from the premise that Mr. Coward "gets away with it." Colloquially the phrase is associated with quick-witted persons who are able to enjoy the proceeds by evading the consequences of what they have done. My colleague intended no such implication in this case: his point was that Mr. Coward had succeeded where many others had failed.

It may surprise many people to know that in the realm of fiction the most practised art is that of the short story, which can be confirmed by a cursory glance at any bookstall and at the magazine pages of popular newspapers. Yet how few of these practitioners get away with it in the sense that their work has any permanent value. Which explains why collections of short stories in volume form are unpopular with the reading public. Some exceptions in our time have been Kipling, Somerset Maugham, Katherine Mansfield, Ernest Hemingway, and A. E. Coppard.

First Edition hunters have no need to be reminded of the security of Mr. Coppard's place among these select few. In this most difficult art he has made a name because, like Kipling, he is a born storyteller; because he has a style personal to himself, and adapted in most instances to the oddities of his characters, which are largely drawn from simple, unsophisticated types. At his most successful he goes, like Dickens, to the lowest strata of society, drawing upon the idiom of his simple folk.

STRIKING A "NOVEL" NOTE: D. J. Hall, whose *Perilous Sanctuary* (Harrap. 7s. 6d.) which has been chosen as "the *Evening Standard* Book of the Month" for March, has as its theme the activities of the Penitentes, a remarkable sect of religious flagellants in New Mexico. Mr. Hall, it may be remembered, wrote a revealing article on this very subject in "The Sphere" about a year ago

The best of his latest collection **NINEPENNY FLUTE** (Cape. 7s. 6d.) is the story from which it takes its title. Harry Dunning sold his flute to another boy for ninepence. In the language of his own mean streets, the boy tells the story; and in the comparatively short space of it we find ourselves completely inside Harry's little world, turning the last page with the conviction that we have learned more of it than we have from many a longer study on the same subject.

The other outstanding story is a dialogue between two old paupers sitting in shelter facing a tree in whose fog-shrouded branches a flock of birds was roosting and fluttering. "Somewhere near by, unseen through its vast cocoon of fog, is the workhouse with hundreds of forlorn inhabitants." The old men's talk summons up remembrance of things past, reaching out to their youth for glimpses that will make them less forlorn. The story is called *The Deserter*, and is a gem of character drawing. These are certainly the best of a collection by an author who seldom falters from a very high standard.

Mr. Louis Golding, we are reminded in **THE DANCE GOES ON** (Rich and Cowan. 7s. 6d.), is a novelist of strong themes. With him there are no half measures, in Magnolia Street or elsewhere. So when we find ourselves in Russia it is no brief visit, but the Russia of the Tsars, the Imperial Ballet, of Grand Dukes and Princes, to be followed by the Revolution, by relentless Commissars, of imprisonment and escape, and of the ballet in exile.

Mironova is not merely a Russian dancer, but the greatest of all ballerinas. Borodin, her master, not only trained her from the cradle, but took possession of her, body and soul. The greatest of maestros, he fought and frustrated her love for the most brilliant of all surgeons who saved her most beloved brother's life. Krilenko, now combining Communist power with surgery, still holds her heart, though for her the dance must go on, beyond the closed frontiers of the U.S.S.R.

Strong indeed are Mr. Golding's flamboyances, and a lesser writer would not be able to carry them without a descent into impure melodrama. So nearly first rate is Mr. Golding that he almost convinces the reader that life is as large as he draws it. If he could only scale down a little I am sure there is a great novel latent in his pen.

Strong in a different sense is Mr. Louis Paul's **HALLELUJAH! I'M A BUM** (Methuen. 7s. 6d.). A "bum," as we learn from the movies, is an American tramp, and Scaeterbun, this book's hero, is a particularly irresponsible specimen, with a facility for the composition of prose and poetry which, at least on one occasion, lands him in jail on an indictment of obscenity.

Those who do not mind a touch of "rawness" in their humour will find it difficult not to rock and roll with laughter at Scaeterbun's adventures, told in terse American idiom. Those who hold stricter views had better leave the book alone, for it is idle to pretend that Mr. Louis Paul is a writer fit to be appointed to be read in Sunday schools.

Nor, for that matter is Mr. William Faulkner who makes sinuous lullabies in prose rhythms, but whose spades are called spades for all that. Of **ABSALOM, ABSALOM!** (Chatto and Windus. 8s. 6d.) the blurb says, "If Mr. Faulkner were to write a simple straightforward tale no one would be more disappointed than his many loyal admirers."

I need scarcely add that the scene of this novel is the South from whence spring Mammy songs, swing music, politicians like Huey Long, and America's most advanced writers. As an occasional, and consequentially humble inquirer at the temple of the cult of unintelligibility, I follow Mr. Faulkner through the Mississippi delta with perseverance and respect. Old-fashioned enough to expect a story in a novel, I seek its threads, faint but pursuing through so many words meaning so many other things that I am groggy on page 137 and go down for a count of ten on page 169.

I can admire my victor in such a contest and will be loyal enough to promise to climb back into the ring when I am feeling stronger, but how I would welcome a "simple straightforward tale" from this indubitably great writer.

From America's South comes yet another novel, **THE LONG NIGHT**, by Andrew Lytle (Eyre and Spottiswoode. 7s. 6d.) this time a good story. "Page by page," declares the challenging blurb, "unquestionably better than *Gone With the Wind*," thereby inviting the irreverent query. So what?

After Mr. Faulkner's wordy whirls it is a positive delight to encounter the clear, direct statement of the beginning of Mr. Lytle's story, to be carried along by its action and reluctantly to part with it after some superb pages of battle description of the Civil War.

The McIvors were from Georgia, but old Cameron killed a man and the family moved westwards. In their new country they found strange men engaged in strange trades, among them the stealing of slaves and mules. The McIvors, somebody decided, soon got to know too much. They were "framed," the countryside rose against them, the father was murdered. The clan gathers, a feud is declared, secretly and stealthily it wreaks vengeance upon one after another of the slayers. It is all done under the cover of darkness, the long night of the McIvors.

Then the Civil War breaks out and the feud is swallowed up into the greater struggle. Pleasant McIvor, the hero, finds himself fighting alongside men whom he had sworn to kill; he must choose between the cause for which he is fighting and the vows of vengeance made in a more personal and none the less bitter struggle. It is a grand story, wrought in swift action, encompassed by battle, murder, and sudden death, enthrallingly full of thrills in the first half and rising to a vivid dignity in its climax upon the stricken battlefields of the South.

I must say at once that **SECRETS OF AN ART DEALER** (Robert Hale. 15s.) is the greatest fun. It has shaken my faith in these gentlemen (which was once of a confiding, and even childlike, nature) to its foundations; and it has put an abrupt, though perhaps temporary, stop to my own antique buying, hitherto conducted on an unambitious Caledonian-market scale. But however alarming in its effects, it is still a thoroughly entertaining book. It is also a well and aptly-named book. The only wonder to me is the nature of the urge which moved Mr. J. H. Duveen to confide to a possibly wide public secrets of such magnitude. Deals involving £100,000 at a time are not only described for us in the most informative detail; but the fact that £80,000 to £90,000 of those deals was sheer profit that went to the man who could think fastest is light-heartedly stressed.

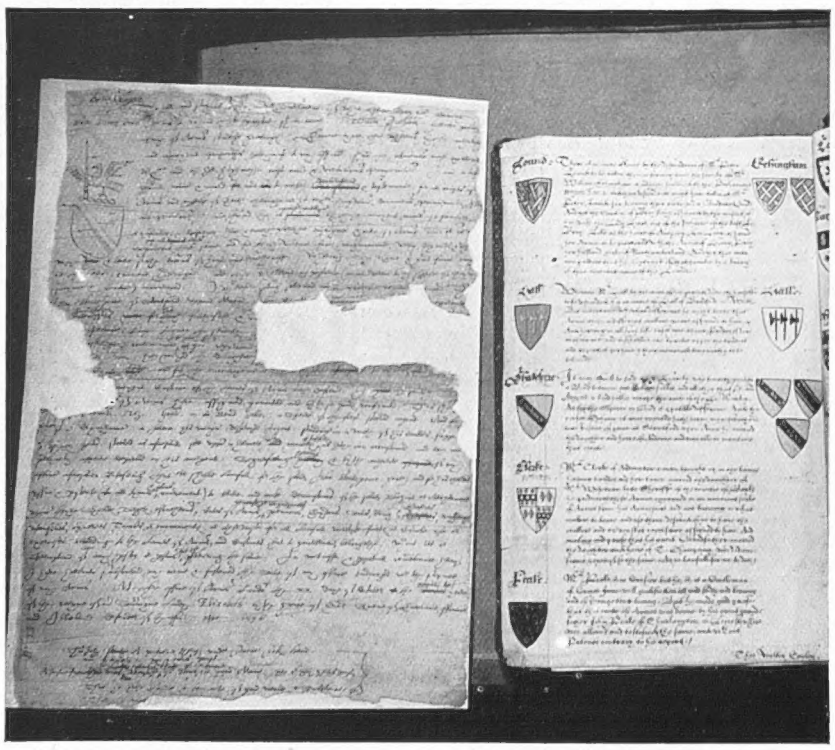
Dealers do each other down left and right; and as the figures of their transactions mount, so does their ingenuity. There seems to be no end to the changes they can ring on Gothic suits of armour and ninth-century reliquaries—in most cases, too, with phenomenal success.

The cunning of a serpent and the manner of a dove are no more than the necessary qualifications for such a profession—or so the author seems to suggest. Customers, too, says Mr. Duveen, are apt to display equal guile—and quite rightly one is apt to say at this point.

Altogether an enlightening and thoroughly disconcerting book.

Enlightening in a different sense is Mr. Steen Eiler Rasmussen's delightful book called **LONDON: THE UNIQUE CITY** (Cape. 15s.). Mr. Rasmussen is a Dane who has given many years of his life to a study of London, bringing to it his own specialised knowledge as an architect, town-planner, and historian. He found that while there were many books on London, none provided a complete picture of the development of the town. As Mr. James Bone, in a valuable introduction, puts it: "From the long history of London he has taken that part which can help us to understand more clearly the City of the present day."

The destroyers of City churches, the pullers-down of Reynolds' house, the desecrators of Berkeley Square, the builders of blocks of flats looking, as Mr. Max Beerbohm has said, "like dreary work-houses" in the place of the Regency elegancies of Park Lane, will not enjoy this book, even if they have the taste to read it. But all who love London—"essentially different" from any other city of the world—will treasure it for its comprehensiveness, its lucidity, its profundity, and for the taste, selection, and beauty of its illustrations.



SHAKESPEAREANA ON VIEW: This draft (left) of a Grant of Arms and Crest to John Shakespeare, of Stratford-on-Avon, father of William Shakespeare, was one of the many interesting manuscripts in the Shakespeare Down-the-Ages Exhibition, which was organised by Mr. Arthur Croxton in aid of the funds of the Shoreditch Housing Association, and held last week at 16, Bruton Street, the Duchess of Gloucester performing the opening ceremony. During the exhibition prominent stage stars gave a series of tableaux and also presented dramatic recitals from the plays

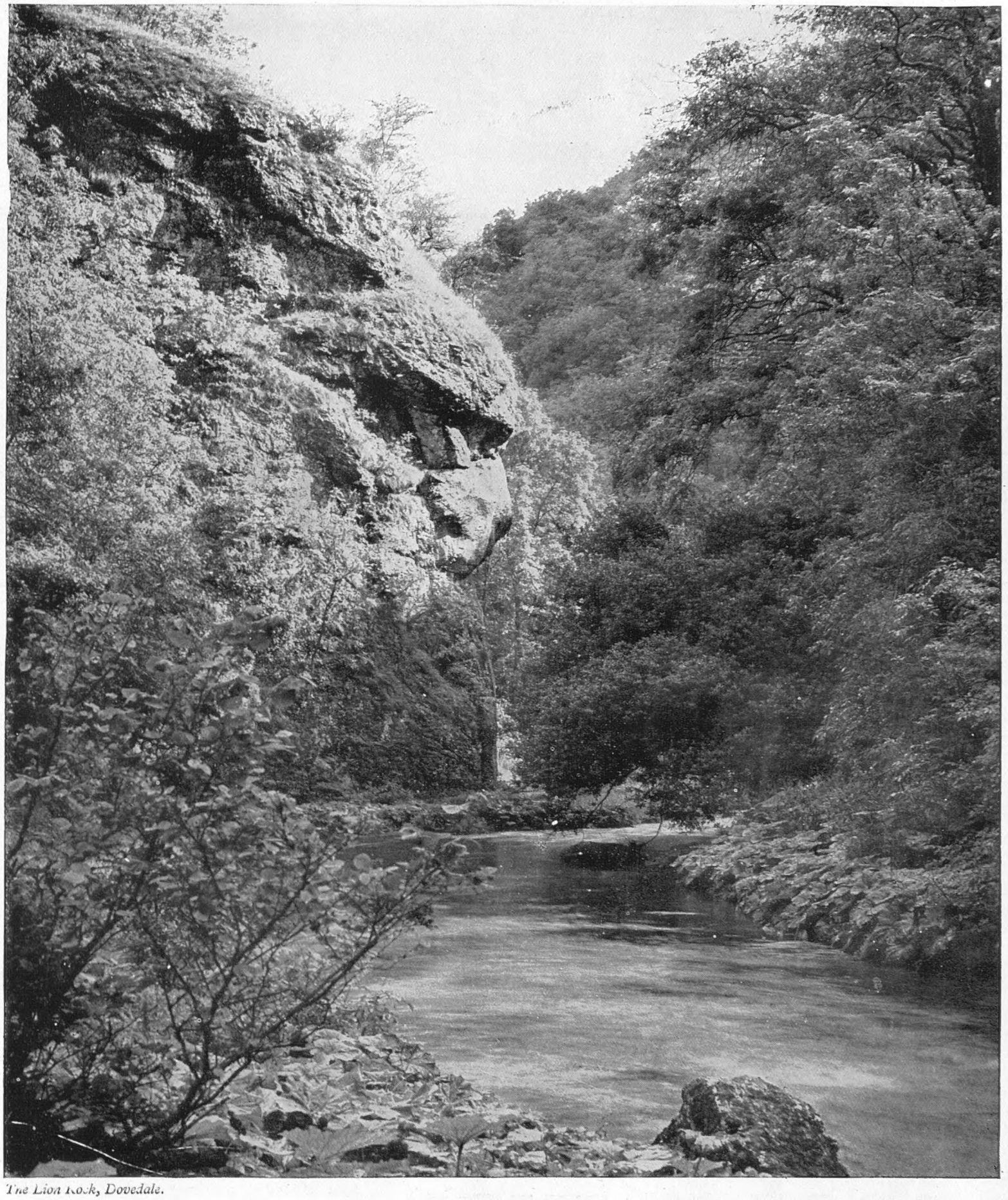
M. Henry de Monfreid is regarded in France as a writer in the tradition of Pierre Loti, and even as a worthy challenger to that illustrious name. A translation of his latest book has just been published as **SEA ADVENTURES** (Methuen. 10s. 6d.), and it is easy enough in this one example to recognise the quality which the French claim for him.

De Monfreid appears, by his own story, as a rebel. Certainly a rebel from convention, since few men have ever attempted the life he led willingly, and for which he renounced all European customs, to live on Red Sea islands; and just as certainly a rebel from all authority, and to most of the recognised forms of legal administration.

For de Monfreid was a pirate, and not only made his only living from his exploits, but enjoyed

(*Continued on page 466*)

This England . . .



The Lion Rock, Dovedale.

"I ASSURE YOU there are things in Derbyshire as noble as in Greece or Switzerland," wrote Byron to his friend Tom Moore; and much time thereafter did they spend here. Nor is this just scenery—to kodak and forget—but a land steeped in the traditions and domestic history of the race. Let there be praise, therefore, for the men of goodwill who have given of their lands about the lovely valley of the Dove to the National Trust, that this inheritance may be preserved to us. For it is not always easy to keep intact our patrimony in a swiftly changing world, and we may be thankful even for our Worthington, brewed hard by at Burton in the traditional way and preserved to us indeed by our own goodwill.

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An entrant in the R.A.C. Hastings Rally passing a non-entrant that had skidded on to the verge of the ice-bound Porlock-Lynmouth road. Despite frost, fog, and sleet, nearly all the competing cars succeeded in reaching Hastings

Cutting off a giant slice of corner on the main road between Dunkeld and Ballinlu'g, Perthshire, where straightening operations have been in progress for some time, involving the removal of many thousands of tons of earth and rock

HIGHWAY HAPPENINGS

UNEARTHING A ROMAN LUXURY SPA IN FRANCE. *(Continued from page 444)*

spirit and with the skill of historic research. Indeed, the so-called "new excavations" were only begun in 1911, while the endeavour to lay bare the town's early development as well as its condition at the time of its destruction had to wait until eight years ago! It is in the light of these latest diggings, and of those at adjacent Herculaneum, that experts are now able to narrate something of the history, social organisation, trade, industry, agriculture, entertainment, and of the arts, through all the days of Pompeii. It is increasingly possible to recreate a living picture of the society of a typical Roman community, and not less than this is Mayor Delarbre's ultimate dream in respect of Alba Augusta, founded about A.D. 50 by Caesar's adopted son, Augustus.

Alba was a highly privileged community enjoying the political rights of Roman citizenship, naming its own Senate, and voting in the election of magistrates in Rome. Pliny sang its wealth and luxury.

"Alba had two temples, to Jupiter and to pagan Augustan priests," instructed M. Delarbre, as we passed between crude stone cottages forming the main street of his twentieth-century village numbering a thousand souls. "It had its stadium, theatres, thermal establishment, its palace of the governor. You will see how the peasants assembled the Roman stones, tiles, and other remains to wall off their fields. We can recover a multitude of these relics and rebuild with them provided we have enough to purchase the ground. As it happened, I owned the part where we are digging out the foundations of the amphitheatre." The Mayor broke off, stooped, picked up a fragrant of pottery, examined it. We were still in the middle of a stony field under cultivation.

"You see, this is what happens! Here is another fragment to add to my little collection. And, look, you can even read the name of the manufacturer!" I could not understand the lettering, but there it was.

Soon we faced the present state of the theatre excavation. I need not describe it. Nor could I. I only know that the foundations seemed, as the Mayor pointed out, in a state of remarkable preservation. Stage boxes were clearly discernible. Officials and experts, one learnt, had come, beheld, and departed enthusiastically.

I took leave of M. Delarbre on high ground beneath which lies what is left of the palace, hub of Alba life that was. He hoped that England might be interested, and that Riviera-bound motorists of the future would be able briefly to branch off from No. 7 and dally an hour amid a minor, sawed-off stump of a Pompeii.

SHELL is not what it was

AND NEVER WILL BE

CARS ARE CHANGING, and petrol (if it is to remain a best-seller like Shell) has to change too. This change is mainly a trend towards higher compression ratios, which means that petrol nowadays has to work under more severe conditions.

With ordinary petrol this extra pressure in the cylinders creates "pinking." "Pinking" is caused by the petrol vapour exploding in too great a hurry and results in waste of power and overheating. Shell, however, has overcome this problem by a process called "re-forming" which rearranges the molecular structure of the petrol.

What happens is that the atoms of hydrogen and carbon, which in ordinary petrol can take the form of long chains, are "re-formed" into stable groupings. In this compact formation they are not susceptible to detonation and they combine regularly and evenly (instead of spasmodically) with the molecules of oxygen supplied by the air from the carburettor; thus combustion is controlled and "pinking" prevented.

This is one example of the changes which Shell is constantly making to adapt its petrol to suit the modern car.

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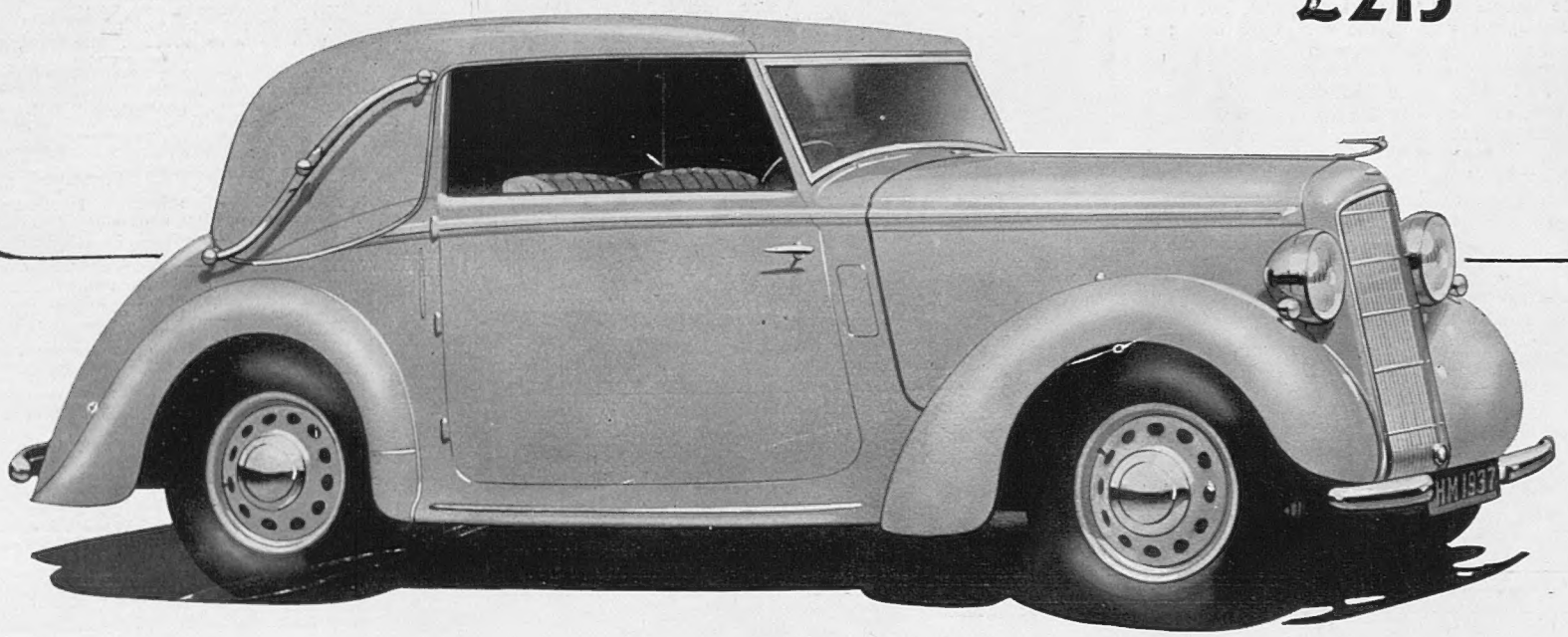

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